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MONK AND KNIGHT

VOLUME I.

MONK AND KNIGHT

AN

Historical Study in Fiction

BY

FRANK W. GUNSAULUS

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME I.

CHICAGO
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NOTE.

IT is proper to say that the large number of well-known sayings, letters, and documents which occur in this study of the early half of the sixteenth century, appear in those translations with which, as the Author is led to believe, the general reader is most familiar. So far as he knows, each of these has taken its place as a part of literature or history. He desires to acknowledge with gratitude many kindnesses characteristic of the late Ferdinand Denis, Administrator of the Bibliothèque Sainte Genevieve, to whom it was a joy even to apply for copies of unique historical manuscripts.

PLYMOUTH CHURCH STUDY,
CHICAGO.

"κρύφιε τελείως ἐλπίσατε"

CONTENTS.

		Page
Proem.	The Morning Hour in Europe	9
Chapter		
I.	Entertaining Angels Unawares	28
II.	Strangers and Fellow-Citizens	37
III.	A Recognized Guest	46
IV.	At an English Abbey	54
V.	Unpleasant Visitors	65
VI.	A Novice and Fugitive	80
VII.	A French Chateau	88
VIII.	The King under Governance	97
IX.	Witches and Knights	108
X.	A Young Scholar and a Young King	121
XI.	The Holy Catholic Church	131
XII.	The Holy Catholic Church	141
XIII.	Fading Facts and Living Dreams	148
XIV.	A Visitor at Glastonbury	161
XV.	A Shaking Faith	177
XVI.	At Lutterworth Again	186
XVII.	A Waldensian of the Renaissance	193
XVIII.	Maiden and Novice	201
XIX.	Holy Communion	212
XX.	Marignano	224
XXI.	Pope, King, and Knight	236
XXII.	Unrenewed France	245

Chapter		Page
XXIII.	The White Peak amid Dark Clouds	250
XXIV.	Easter at Glastonbury	261
XXV.	The Growing Problem	269
XXVI.	An Impassable Abyss	278
XXVII.	An Unchained Book	293
XXVIII.	An Unchained Book	304
XXIX.	Vian the Pythagorean	311
XXX.	A Call upon the Cardinal	327
XXXI.	The Field of the Cloth of Gold	333
XXXII.	Jealousy and Magnificence	342
XXXIII.	Love and Learning	349
XXXIV.	An Unhorsed Knight	360

MONK AND KNIGHT.

PROEM.

THE MORNING HOUR IN EUROPE.

Other futures stir the world's great heart;
Europe has come to her majority,
And enters on the vast inheritance
Won from the tombs of mighty ancestors, —
The seeds, the gold, the gems, the silent harps
That lay deep buried with the memories
Of old renown.

GEORGE ELIOT.

THE Renaissance was a reformation of the European intellect; the Reformation was a renaissance of the European conscience. Both movements were returns to the past: the intellect found deliverance from scholasticism in its study of Greece and Rome; the conscience felt the chains of ecclesiasticism disappear as once more it saw the open gospel of the Christ. Each movement was also a distinctly marked step into the future, because, in each, the human soul had rediscovered itself, and readily bounded forward with a persuasion that to it alone belonged the infinite time.

To those, however, to whom institutions and traditions are more sacred than the soul, it must always appear that the reins of the future were held, in the earlier decades of the sixteenth century, by four boys, each of whom looked forth with vivid expectations into manhood. He who was to rule the Church as Leo X. had been Cardinal since he was thirteen; Henry VIII. succeeded to the fortunes of the Tudor dynasty in 1509, at the age of eighteen; six years later, Francis I., the incarnation of strong ambitions and weak convictions, was sovereign of France at the age of twenty; and, in 1519, at the same age, Charles V. of Spain was chosen to a crown unsurpassed in importance, by the extent and richness of its dominion, since the days of Charlemagne.

These men will interest us, for the most part, only as the less conspicuous currents of human life, which less illustrious mortals represent, rushing against them, are temporarily deflected in their movements, or made to bear the shadow of immense personal influences upon their moving surfaces. Greater than all of them was the incoming tide, which was to make such new configurations in the old shores, and strew them so luxuriantly with seaweed, wreck, and pearls.

There is much to interest the thinker when the fragments of some fine old mediæval ship are lifted upon the sands. Many hands lent their skill to its creation, and many human hearts fastened their hopes and aspirations to its strength. Much of the highest faith which man knew was enshrined in its hard tissues, and much of human longing went out with the moment of its dedication to the unknown sea. If it be a creed which once promised a vision of some far-away shore, or an institution which held the desire of man from the deeps, there will be voices only to wail and eyes only to weep, as the wave rolls back. It must not astonish, if often, when some

wave more vast than the rest, and flashing with a fuller splendor, shall have thrown far to land a single pearl, stolen in its leaping energy from some unsuspected depth, — a pearl which has both Orient and Occident hidden in its radiant completeness, — a pearl which shall remind the soul of the richness of the concealed realms of life, — there shall be no eye to perceive its glory, or no heart brave enough to seize it, before it shall be covered with the sea-weed and the slime. The very brilliance of the movement known as the Renaissance is often to be seen hard by the darkness which had grown old and shadowy; and popes and kings, so much the conservators and guardians of institutions, so little the inspirers and leaders of men, must be expected to impersonate the obedient and serviceable midnight rather than the imperious, restless morning.

At the earliest date mentioned in connection with these, who were the visible rulers of sixteenth-century Christendom, duly honored and enthroned, what is called the Renaissance had advanced, even in France, England, and Germany, to something like a sure promise of victory; and that great band, separated by seas and mountains, but undivided and indivisible in spirit and in hope, called the "Reformers before the Reformation," had created an atmosphere so resonant and withal so true that the blows of Martin Luther had promise of being heard from echoing cathedral doors.

It is the most mischievous of errors — I had almost said the most perilous of habits — for historians to seek to separate the intellectual from the spiritual elements which coexist within that vast and chaotic solution out of which ultimately came the order and power of modern life. Columbus the Spanish discoverer, is Columbus the religionist, who writes in his log-book the words, "In the name of Jesus." Even the monk is the copyist of classics; and the thunder of Savonarola, who seemed to

disdain the Renaissance in his effort at reformation, breaks the bonds which linger to fetter the brain of Florence. The human soul is a unit. Faith, in all comprehensive accounts of it, is the act of the whole spirit, — intellect, sensibilities, will. The advance of the mental faculties meant perhaps less belief, but certainly more faith, for the deepening of man's religious life. The purification and development of true faith meant perhaps a less number of theories, but certainly a larger knowledge for man's intellectual life.

The Renaissance, as it flowered into the Reformation, was a new birth of the whole man. It was an evolution; it was a revolution, — a revolution inside an evolution. It was an orderly movement; it was a disorderly movement, — the disorder was walled in, and guarded by order. Cosmos comprehended chaos, and at length ruled it with a supreme gentleness. Delayed evolution always makes revolution; and less of storm was unavoidable, for so long the calm had been a crime.

> "Down came the storm. In ruins fell
> The worn-out world we knew.
> It passed, — that elemental swell, —
> Again appeared the blue."

When Henry VIII. advanced to the English throne, and the young Francis, Duc d'Angoulême, was playing the part of a sportive boy, in 1509, the currents of the Renaissance had gathered strength, as they flowed, and England and France had begun to feel the well-nigh omnipotent impulse. The world had been growing larger as the human soul had been quickened into new life and hope. For two hundred years the world had possessed Gioja's compass. The telescope had been bringing the glowing secrets of immensity into the human brain for more than two and one-half centuries. Paper and gunpowder had anticipated the invention of the

printing-press, in 1438, by more than two hundred years. Columbus had vied with Copernicus in quoting from Aristotle and Philolaus, until ecclesiasticism had grown indignant, and stupid royalty had smiled. The sailors of Portugal had been as bold in the East and in the West as had the thinkers at Florence and the artists of Rome in their treatment of ideas. Italy had felt the tread of Greek scholars who fled from Constantinople to her quiet shores as certainly as had that city of the East felt the inroads of the victorious Turks. The scholar had walked the streets of Florence, since the Council of 1438 between the Greek and Latin Churches, with the freedom with which, for centuries before the opening of the Middle Ages, the Roman soldier paced the streets of Jerusalem. In 1470 Virgil was printed, to be followed, in less than a generation, by Homer and Aristotle. In 1482 Plato spoke to Italy in the Latin tongue, through the translations of Ficino; and for years a lamp had burned before his bust in the palace of the Medici. While the flesh of Savonarola was burning, his beloved city had been reading the explanation of the harmony between Moses, the lawgiver of Israel, and Plato, the philosopher of Greece, from the pen of Mirandola. For a century a shipload of gems from India, relics from Judæa, arms from Persia, or many-colored dyes from Tyre or Phœnicia had been held to be incomparably poor, by the side of a galley in whose freight might be found the manuscript of an oration of Cicero or that of a play of Æschylus. Barlaam, fresh from ecclesiastical councils, had opened the poetry of Greece to the student of the classics. Petrarch had sung the delicate joys of the most tender of Italian poets; and the school of Chrysolaus had for a hundred years been duly celebrated. Bessarion had made the air about him Athenian in its quality; and the monasteries had been regarded for so long as the treasure-houses of manuscripts, that the hidden depravity of their

clergy had been almost forgotten. Even in Germany, Politian, the Italian poet, had made a new career for himself, in John Reuchlin, theologian and humanist. Latin poets at Erfurt had seconded the impulse generated by the Elector Frederic, who had founded the University of Wittenberg. The universities of Paris and Cologne had sought to surpass Florence and Venice, in offering hospitality to penniless Greek scholars and wandering pedants, who often spoke and wrote abominable Latin.

The complete sway of the Renaissance had, however, its most brilliant testimony in Italy. Angelo had walked through the gardens of Lorenzo, which were full of classic art in the forms of figures and statues, studying the antique; and in the evenings he had talked with Landino or Pulci about the myths of classic times. He had read Dante in the same palace in which he learned Platonism; and he was now dreaming of the glory of the Sistine ceiling. It was an atmosphere in which a Nicholas V. could outwardly and proudly aid a Theodore Gaza and John Argyrolos in the attempt to interest Europe in the Iliad and Odyssey. Boccaccio's prose translation of Homer was in the hands of scholars like Erasmus, while certain of the priests of the Church labored to convince him that the souls of brutes and men were the same, and quoted Pliny as authority. While Rienzi had been storming the castle of an extortionate nobility, Dante was uttering his devotion to Virgil, in the greatest of Italian poems.

The age of libraries and collectors, of the Vatican and the Medicean, of Bracciolini and Aurispa, had come. The era of critics and grammarians had succeeded the era of feudal lords and gay knights. The lost decades of Livy were mourned over, as the world never had mourned over the death of Peter the Hermit.

The new crusader, if he looked toward the East at all, had sought to recover the poems of Sappho, rather than

to scale the walls of Jerusalem. Art had yielded to the revival. Praxiteles from afar had given a new edge to the chisel of Italian sculpture, and classic stories and the classic spirit had broken the fetters in which the Church had bound the genius of the immediate predecessors of Da Vinci and Raphael. It was an hour when, through the revival of learning, Henry VIII. was able to hear in his land, in strange renewal, Roger Bacon's prophecy of the philosophy of Lord Verulam; when in France the young duke soon to be Francis I. might have heard, over the noise of the proposed crusades, the voice of Abelard breaking in upon his wooing of Eloise, with protests against the confusion of word-mongering with philosophy; when in Italy even the ears of Leo X. were attentive to words, now aged enough, which had recorded the intellectual self-respect of the Fratricelli. That mighty triumvirate — Dante, Savonarola, Angelo, each one of whom has been called the prophet of the Renaissance: the first, a reformer and artist in poetic words; the second, a poet and artist in reforming deeds; the third, a reformer and poet in art — marks an era in Italy, in which the mind of man acknowledged the subtle interpenetration of Orient and Occident.

The West had been touched by the East in literature and philosophy. The greater West had been discovered by a West which had already become Eastern. The geography of the earth was changing with the geography of the mind of man. There was the printing-press, which, from the day of Gutenberg, had made intelligence independent of all localities. Man had come to a consciousness of his large world relations, and the era of questioning all traditions and boundaries was fairly inaugurated.

It was impossible to keep this new life from entering quite as deeply into the brain and heart of England and France. For almost a generation the silence of the

solemn cloisters of Westminster had been disturbed by the creaking of Caxton's press; and the monks of St. Albans had mingled their muttered prayers with the more intelligible sounds of the busy pressman, comprehending little how mighty a power that printing-press would become in the demolition of Romish rites. While Niccolo de Niccoli was gathering the volumes of Boccaccio into their new wooden cases in the convent of San Spirito, another scholar was beholding that elegant copy of Livy in French, — a volume of which the good Duke Humphrey was the glad recipient, — a superb example, withal, from that collection of nearly nine hundred gorgeously bound volumes which the enthusiastic bibliophile the Duke of Bedford had obtained from Charles V. of France. No longer did every scholarly chronicler write, as did the Venerable Bede in commemoration of the chastity of Etheldreda, —

> " Let Maro wars in loftier numbers sing;
> I sing the praises of our heavenly king.
> Chaste is my verse, nor Helen's rape I write:
> Light tales like these but prove the mind as light."

On the other hand, for two centuries many of the priests had been ambitious to exhibit a classical style in speech, and some of the affectations which the Renaissance begat in the abbeys were ludicrous indeed. While, in Italy, Angelo was proclaiming the Torso Belvedere as his true master, John Colet was bringing into his own England those lectures to be delivered at the University of Oxford, in which " the new learning " was to find its first public alliance with the Bible. When Alberto Pio was supplying Aldus with the funds with which he obtained the machinery known as the Aldine press, Linacre and Grocyn were under the tuition of Politian and Chalcondyles; and in 1491 Oxford had known how earnestly they had studied in the Platonic academy. As Columbus heard from the " Pinta " the cry, " Land ahead ! " Thomas More was com-

ing under their influence as teachers of "the new learning." "Greece had crossed the Alps," when Reuchlin had in his hand the translation of Thucydides; Greece had crossed the channel when Erasmus had perceived the possibilities of the career of Henry VIII., when the scholar saw him, at nine years of age, at the court of Henry VII.

A long ancestry preceded Archbishop Warham and William Latimer, one of whom was furnishing Erasmus with beer at Oxford, the other of whom was so soon to popularize his influence at Cambridge. Alcuin, at York, learning what to obtain abroad to enrich the libraries of kings, and walking in the shade of Egbert, who had ransacked Rome for treasures; John of Bruges, who was a bibliomaniac with the most omnivorous appetite; Thomas Cobham, who had dreamed of a great library at Oxford in 1317; Bishop Carpenter of Exeter, who added books to the relics which slumbered in the charnel-house; William Taunton, who succeeded that *Amator Librorum;* John Taunton, at Glastonbury; Peter of Blois, and the thousand unknown book-lovers who helped to copy and collate, to steal and buy the fragments of the literature of the past, — all of them spoke in the dawn of a new day, with a clear voice and rejoicing tones. Everything seemed to conspire, for a combination of the energies which had awakened Italy, around the throne which was soon to be occupied by a new king. That combination had been making, from the moment of Roger Bacon's utterance until the hour when, in 1498, the eager Lord Mountjoy had brought Erasmus to England.

Smaller by far was the influence of the Renaissance in the land soon to be ruled by Francis I; yet by 1515 the sky of France was full of morning light. The scholastic philosophy which had made theology so aimless and so heavy, had felt a penetrating gleam strike its dolorous fog. The University of Paris was aware that a fresh radiance was stealing over the sky. Some of the

Greek mercenaries employed by Louis XII. — with one of whom we shall become acquainted in this study — had come with the power of the future wrapped up with their memories of the past; and often in the clothes of some exiled child of Athens could be found a copy of a page from some one of the classics. Gregory of Tiferno was trying to teach Greek and rhetoric in Paris when Felelfo was commenting on Dante at Milan. Basselin, Villon, and Alan Chartier were poets whose lays were compelled to mingle with humorous quotations from Homer and Plautus, brought thither by exiles and wanderers; and the scholars in the Church speedily saw, in spite of the darkness of the Sorbonne, that some reconciliation must ultimately be made between letters and belief. Learning was knocking at the door of the Holy Church; and the associates of the new king were soon bound at least to affect Greek art, Roman literature, and the society of printers such as the Estiennes, and scholars such as Louis de Berquin and Lefèvre. The air was balmy with the fragrant dawn, though the Church and the throne were asleep.

This mighty revolution in the thought of humanity, quickening the mind to larger and stronger action, broadening before it the countless opportunities for the exercise of its energies, holding in front of it a multitude of fascinating invitations to unsuspected achievements, urging it to accept them by numberless thrilling impulses, — this veritable dawn broke upon the brain of Europe at the hour when the human soul had become conscious of its slavery to the institution called the Holy Catholic Church. Already conscience was revolting against her practices, and was in rebellion against her superstitions. Noble as had been the ministry of the Church for centuries; great as had been her service as a bridge from the old Roman world to the new world just before man's

vision; indispensable as she had been as a power for order and progress in government, education, and religion, for ten centuries and more, — the hour had at length come when that function was no longer needed, and it was evident that she had refused to take up the next great duty. She was declining to lead the intellect into the new realms which it was predestined to enter and to conquer. She was looking backward, not forward. She was asserting her authority without having any echo start in the reason and thought of man. She relied on her might as an institution, at the hour when man had concluded that institutions are not ends, but means to ends. Democracy was in the air; she was imperial, monarchic, absolute. Human life had grown too large and too powerful to be limited or dominated by the conception which she had of its possibilities.

In 1484 John Laillier, Doctor of the Sorbonne, cried out: "Since the days of Saint Sylvester, Rome is no church of Christ, but a mere state church for extorting money." Ten years later, Columbus had read a new declaration of independence to the enterprise of man, and inflamed the imagination of Europe, by finding a fresh field for human endeavor and achievement. Three years later still, Aldus Manutius the printer had written in his edition of Aristotle: "Those who cultivate letters must be supplied with books necessary for their purpose; and till this supply be obtained I shall not be at rest." "In the name of Jesus Christ," was the legend borne by the flag of each new crusader. One was seeking the resurrection place of the essential Christ in reform; another, in discovery; another, in popular intelligence. A fresh and omnipotent vision of the real Christ had come; the old was fading away.

Not more cruelly did the Church confine the brain and assault the growing intellect, than she stupefied and

outraged the conscience of men. She was an institution which by remaining stationary had become rotten, while her walls were being hung with colors and her floors relaid with a mosaic of gems. The soul had at last become too large for the garment, however elegant, however sacred. It was moth-eaten and decayed; the soul was never so conscious of rapidly growing youth. Anything, however coarse the texture and however poor in historic associations, if only it were both large and clean, would be a grateful substitute for this confining and unclean vesture. As the brain demanded room for its life and development, the conscience demanded freedom and righteousness.

So simply, so vitally is the Reformation connected with the Renaissance. While the Greek poets were being quoted in the Florentine academy, Pope Julius II. was acknowledging the immorality of the leaders of the Church, as he said, "If we ourselves are not pious, why should we keep the people from being so?" It was a long train of abuses, fostered by the Holy See and blessed by priestcraft, which lay behind the remark of the Pope whose voice we are to hear in the progress of events which this study partially describes, Leo X., when he said, "Let us enjoy the papacy, now that God has given it to us." Honest and pure men remembered, at that time, that only a generation had gone since the papal throne had been disgraced by the presence of four such men as Pietro Barba, Francesco delle Rovere, Giambattista Cibo, and Roderigo Borgia. The lower clergy, also, had for many years presented a sorry spectacle. There had been noble men in the papal chair; so also were there many men pure and true in the monasteries. But the majority were too constant in practices of evil to make of the piety and purity of the slight minority aught but such exceptions as proved the rule.

The intelligence and conscience of Europe began to

behold the offence against civil government, in a condition of affairs which allowed criminals to resort to the monastic life that they might escape the just punishment which otherwise would descend upon their wickedness. The law was powerless; the Church held the reins of authority over the State as surely as when Gregory VII. compelled Henry IV. to tread with bare feet the ice-clad summit of Canossa, and bend the fortunes of empire to his tyrannical arrogance.

As the conscience of the times awakened out of sleep, it became roused to indignant protest. The man who felt a new dawn over the intellect, as he read Petrarch's praise of classic bards, turned another page and read his sonnet on the papal court at Avignon :—

"Fountain of woe! Harbor of endless ire!
Thou school of errors, haunt of heresies!
Once Rome, now Babylon, the world's disease,
That maddenest men with fears and fell desire!
O forge of fraud! O prison dark and dire,
Where dies the good, where evil breeds increase!
Thou living Hell! Wonders will never cease,
If Christ rise not to purge thy sins with fire.
Founded in chaste and humble poverty,
Against thy founders thou dost raise thy horn,
Thou shameless harlot! And whence flows this pride?
Even from foul and loathed adultery,
The wage of lewdness. Constantine, return!
Not so, the felon world its fate must bide.[1]

He saw how inevitably Romish ambition and greed had brought the Holy Church to such a condition. Men had already demanded reform. Nearly a century before, the papal legate at Basle, Cardinal Julian Cesarini, had advocated a reform, to prevent a rebellion of the laity and the extinction of the clerical functions. As such utterances were called to mind, the names of the earlier reformers shone with startling brilliance. Splendid, indeed, now began to seem the figure of Peter Waldo

[1] Symonds' translation.

at Lyons and those of his successors, who in the valleys of Piedmont and Dauphiny had suffered for their hope, as they had stood up against the corruption and tyranny of Rome. Bright became the face of Peter de Bruys, as from the flames of 1130 his eyes quivered with the sublime expectancy that the abuses in the Church would be mitigated. Heroic in stature began to tower upward the form of John Wycliffe, as the mind of Europe woke to behold the Church of his time usurping the rights of the Crown, impoverishing England to furnish luxuries for Rome, while two popes were pronouncing anathemas each upon the other, and bishops, like Spener, were engaged in wholesale homicide for their sakes. As the disgraceful character of many of the popes, bishops, abbots, and priests became known, the thoughtful layman looked more favorably on John Huss and Jerome of Prague, who had denied their authority, rejecting the value set upon their excommunications, and treating the offered indulgences as abominations; and they looked less favorably upon those who lit fires for their martyrdom. John Tauler and Gerard Groote — one giving to the soul the privilege and results of pious meditations, the other constituting the Order of the Brothers of a Common Life — took other places than those assigned to them by crafty priests, when the people felt what the truth which the one spoke and the education which the other began, must do for a benighted and corrupt Church. Thomas à Kempis was read by hundreds who had done with hollow forms and debauched bishops, and who sought, instead, the power of God. John of Wesel became a pillar of fire by night, as the laity began to look backward, and to behold how dark it was when he truly called the indulgences "errors and lies." Darker still, however, had it continued to be. Faithful men now listened to the Bishop of Worms, as he said: "Concubinage, from the commencement of the fifteenth century,

is publicly and formally practised by the clergy, and their mistresses are as expensively dressed and as respectfully treated as if their connection were not sinful and indecent, but honorable and praiseworthy." Voices which had been hushed in death by wicked popes and ambitious councils, rang out in their unforgotten words with an eloquence which had at last touched every sincere heart.

Literature had a rich field in the facts and fancies associating themselves with an unreformed Church. Walter Mapes made such rare sport out of the papal throne and the monk's cowl, and he did it in such excellent rhyme, that it is impossible to read either the history of the Church or the history of wit, and omit his "Golias." "The Vision of Piers Plowman," and the verses of Geoffrey Chaucer are poems quite as full of genuine agitation on the topic of the corruption and crimes of the Church, as was a speech of Daniel O'Connell concerning the state of Ireland. With unsparing sarcasm, heartiest good-humor, and often with noblest indignation did the poets and teachers of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries paint an institution, haughty, selfish, gross, and wicked, filled with a clergy ignorant, vile, tyrannical, and cruel. Leo X. might hasten to forbid the "Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum" to be read; but before his hour had come, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Dante, and Poggio had furnished, through the help of the printing-press newly invented, hundreds of volumes in which the Church, as she then existed, was proven to be incapable and unworthy; and many of these were prophets of that day, soon to come, which William Tyndale was to see. "If God will spare my life," said he to a learned ecclesiastic, "I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of Scripture than thou dost."

These books of unsparing wit and liveliest humor had

not been read at all, had there not been a keen sense of the audacious offensiveness of ecclesiastical power. It was impossible for the hierarchy to keep such of her own ranks as the bishops of Augsburg, Breslau, and Meissen from telling the truth concerning the real condition of religious life to the growing host who had no longer faith in the ideals of the Church. The air was so charged with the forces of reformation that the songs of the shoemaker, Hans Sachs, echoed upon the morning with the commanding music of a trumpet calling unto battle. Germany was as weary of extracting coins from the labor of her people, to make rich and luxurious the career of church officials at Rome, as England was of beholding what a door was opened to papal arrogance, when the stupid Henry III. admitted the claims of Rome. France, however, was not so disgusted at the licentious pomp of the papal court at Avignon, between 1342 and 1352, as was even the easy Italian conscience, in the presence of such a state of affairs in the Church as would justify Dante, when he said,—

> "Modern shepherds need
> Those who on either hand prop and lead them,
> So burly are they grown; and from behind
> Others to hoist them. Down palfrey's sides
> Spread their broad mantles, so as both the beasts
> Are covered with one skin. O patience! thou
> That look'st on this, and dost endure so long . . ."

Italy could not forget the associated absolutism of clergy and Guelphs in stimulating civil war. A Pope Urban IV. stealing a crown to place it on the head of a Charles of Anjou was not a figure calculated to inspire religious emotion. Boniface VIII., who outrivalled Hildebrand in his tyrannical assumption of control over civil government, stood by the side of the infamous Innocent IV., who, when he heard of the death of Frederick of Sicily, wrote to his sinful clergy: "Let the heavens

rejoice, and the earth be glad; for the storm that was hovering over your heads has been averted by the death of this man, and is changed into refreshing breezes and nourishing dews." Gregory X. had, two hundred years before, tried to repress what he called "those extravagant swarms of holy beggars," only to leave certain others of the religious orders masters of the field. But so deep was the necessity for reform, and so impossible was it for them to reform the orders and the institution, that the mendicants either uttered protests against the sins and selfishness of the popes, or corruptly bargained at confessions and led in the carnival of licentiousness. When men were most bewildered, and were most strongly commanded, on pain of eternal hell, to obey the infallible head of the Church, the mind of Europe was compelled to behold a two-headed papacy, in the persons of an Urban and a Clement, each during life asserting in the loftiest fashion that the other was fraudulent, and after death, for forty years, perpetuating through their adherents this ludicrous monstrosity, until with Alexander V. three Popes vied with one another in confounding and debauching Christendom.

A sort of relief came when this abominable controversy was succeeded by the elevation and deposition of one, who was only approached in wickedness by Gregory XII. and Benedict XIII., — John XXIII. by name, who was greedy, untruthful, lascivious, and murderous to a degree which would enable him to conduct a wholesale massacre. Even cardinals were compelled to be awkwardly fastidious about what they would drink at the tables of the pious dignitaries and exalted ecclesiastics, lest the draught should prove to be poison instead of wine. Pope and anti-Pope, as Felix V. and Nicholas V., arranged their troubles, each entirely careless of the rights of the laity. A Clement V. or John XXII. could add to sensual rapacity a record of so following the meek and lowly

Lord as to leave eighteen thousand gold florins, and nearly seven thousand more in jewels and silver; and salvation from sin, or rather deliverance from hell, was to be obtained only through certain formularies of which they were the masters, or certain inventions of which they were sole proprietors.

Two shameless women, Theodora and Marozia, had so often and so easily set up and pulled down their relatives, or licentious allies in sin, that there grew up what perhaps is only a tradition, — that the illustrious sinner Joan once guarded and debauched the Holy See. The papal right and dignity had been bought and sold by adulterers and murderers; it had been possessed by Benedict IX., who was old in iniquity, and yet Pope at twelve years of age; it had been rescued by Gregory VII., who made it usurp the rights of empire.

At the remembrance of these things, the thought of printing a Bible for all men to read, in which it was taught by Peter himself that all Christians are priests of the living God, seemed to the papacy and to the clergy like inviting a revolution. Of course, the Bible must be read and explained only by a clerical force, sworn to annihilate such results as this ideal would produce in the minds of men, moved as they now were, and liberated as they were sure to be, by the Renaissance. That men dared to dream of salvation, except through the long and mechanical devices of the priesthood, organized and ruled by popes, was enough to close every Bible, and start the fires of inquisitions.

It had to be considered heresy worthy of death to deny the absolute necessity of penance; else how could the Church have enforced her flagellations, confessions, hair-shirts, grievous pilgrimages, painful scourges, exhaustive fasts, which, by the plan of granting pardons and selling indulgences to those who could buy or be threat-

ened, brought gigantic revenues and sweet satisfaction to the coffers and ambition of the Pope.

One of the Clements had invented the most profitable method of emptying the pockets of sinners, and filling the treasuries of luxurious tyrants, which the world ever knew, — the granting of indulgences. This was the manner of his thinking: "Christ had not only died for men, but he had done more; by his abundant sufferings he and his saints had filled a repository, of which the Church had complete control on earth, — a treasury of accessible merit. This merit could be doled out for a consideration." This, which was insisted upon as a fact, lay at the bottom of the sale of indulgences. Purgatorial fires stood ahead for those who had paid insufficiently, who yet had paid all they could afford to pay here. At last, while the pedler of indulgences was plying his trade in the country, a quarter of a million of human beings in thirty days carried to Rome their coins and their sins, dragging their souls beneath this hideous slavery.

But the end was near; for the Renaissance had quickened the human brain, and the heart was in revolt against this shameless cruelty, which had nothing but swords and flame for those who dared to protest. The conscience thundered and lightened above the abominable spectacle. The storm which should rend many a human breast and overset many a tradition, belief, and throne, had broken upon Europe, never to be silent until a better day had come.

CHAPTER I.

ENTERTAINING ANGELS UNAWARES.

Avenge, O Lord, Thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;
Even them who kept Thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipped stocks and stones,
Forget not; in Thy book record their groans
Who were Thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piedmontese that rolled
Mothers with infants down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple Tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundred-fold who having learned Thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

MILTON.

A LONG red wave of splendor ran swiftly across the summit of the stainless peak which towered just behind the simple dwelling of Gaspar Perrin. The whole year had been one of such agony that every night the quivering crimson on the mountain-top seemed to have been drained from human hearts. Gaspar sat with the sweetest of little children in his lap, her golden hair playing against his honest breast, as the Alpine breezes, which could not be entirely shut out, toyed tenderly with its beauty. It was midwinter, 1509, of the years of grace; but it would have been impossible to one possessed with a faith less strong and sublime

than that of this stalwart Waldensian to have thought of that anguish-laden year as "a year of grace." Terrible as had been the efforts of the dominant ecclesiastical power, under the guidance of Innocent VIII., to root out and abolish the Waldensians in Italy, France, and Germany more than twenty years before, and far more general, this year had marked the very height of papal intolerance and churchly cruelty as they raged in that lovely valley.

Many years before, the ancestors of Gaspar had led their little ones with flock and herd to this spot, that the walls which God Himself had upraised might protect them. The family had that intelligence and experience which made them tremble at the name of the Holy Church. Long ago they had learned that when his Holiness had conferred upon their Swiss neighbors the title of "Protectors of the Liberties of the Church," the Pope held those words to signify something very different from that which the study of the Scriptures and purity of life had made them mean amid the leaping waters, the clear sunshine, and the immutable crags of Switzerland.

This year had enabled them to read for themselves infallible signs of the spirit which demanded a reformation on every hand. No longer could the simplest villager or the most solitary mountaineer content his enthusiasm of opposition to Rome by informing it with the memory of what some chance traveller from France or Germany had related to him, in whispers, of the wrongs which under papal protection held carnival. The fire was glowing and blowing into a fury, from fuel cut at his own door. The year 1509 had been so decisive that it had lifted many a less sensitive and positive man than was Gaspar Perrin over into the prodigious movement called the Reformation.

He had just fed the little girl her evening meal of

goat's milk and bread, and was looking into one of those unsubstantial and yet real worlds which lie behind and often within the world of sense. It was along that line where memory and imagination confront each other — the one looking backward and the other looking forward — that Gaspar's mind was travelling. He was beholding how indivisible these realms — the very dwelling-places and haunts of these two faculties — seem to be, as his recollections went back but a few months to the hour when there were two little children for him to feed at eventide; and as his fancies filled the pathless days and nights of imagination with the presence and wanderings of the child whom he had lost, grief took possession of him.

Gaspar's life was more solitary than ever before, now that the little Ami had been captured and carried away; and as he thought of it, a big tear ran down his great rough cheek, and fell, like a drop of liquid silver, amid the hair of gold.

His had been a life in whose lights and shadows there had been much pathos and poetry. Born here, in the midst of these scenes, his youth had been nurtured upon the most vitalizing food for mind and spirit. His father, Henri Perrin, had feared and loved Almighty God; and this made him a freeman in his very soul. Henri's religious life had been influenced by the inspiring name and works of Peter Waldo of Lyons. His youth was that of a Waldensian at Lyons; and his manhood had been passed in the mountains, in constant expectation that, being a leader of the Waldensians, his place of residence would be found out and his life sacrificed. For thirty years the father of Gaspar had endured poverty and exile with never a murmur. For a generation he had gladly confessed to his joy in the mountain solitudes, as he remembered how, as a layman, he had consecrated the sacrament, and how, as an honest man, he had once

refused to obey a priest of vicious habits. He had told Gaspar of coming events, the prophecy of which the son had not forgotten when, in 1487, his own sister fell under the cruel crusade of Alberto de Capitanei. For him, when Gaspar was only a boy, the priest had gone, and the *guide*, or Barbé, had become his minister. In his ecclesiastical vocabulary character had long ago eclipsed ordination. Purgatory he denied absolutely, and fasts and festivals he abhorred; and Gaspar had grown up to hear the tread of great coming events in his father's animated conversations.

These convictions Gaspar had at once learned to make his own. He had not his father's calmness of temper; and his eyes soon beheld scenes so atrocious that one day he found himself hurried into Italy by having obeyed his own indignant impulse to restrain their foe and his desire to save his friends; and in 1506 he appeared fixed as an exile in Venice, having failed in his effort, utterly broken in hope and very poor in purse. He had soon married an Italian woman of singular mental freedom, who had accepted him suddenly, after an honest but stormy discussion of her religious views with her father, who was then a penniless count. Gaspar was at the time employed as a workman in a press-room in Venice, — a press-room of which the world shall always preserve the chronicle, — and was doing well, when his wife died and left Gaspar with two little children alone in the great world.

When that dreadful event fell upon the life of this husband and father, and he looked upon his little ones through such tears as blunders and poverty never may extract from human eyes, he was only at the beginning of such a strife with his wife's father, Count Aldani Neforzo, as was sure to end in his leaving Venice. No effort or threatenings of the count, who had already forsaken his daughter, could persuade this Waldensian

to obtain or to permit — if possible to prevent — prayers for the dead. Together they had lived in a truer and deeper faith. She should be respected in her opinions and piety, now that death had intervened.

The count brandished weapons of the most effective sort against the humble but heroic press-man. Poor and ill-tempered as was the count, his pedigree and undoubted loyalty to the Church made the priesthood of Venice his agents and slaves. Even the great employer of Gaspar could do nothing, though he should lose the finest workman in Europe, — the servant who in 1502 had suggested the dolphin and anchor for titlepages, the hand which was bringing to Venice the scholars from every quarter who had seen the matchless "Demosthenes" of 1504. Assassination, in the person of a closely covered priest, glared at Gaspar one night as he passed from the printing room into the street. The powers of the Church in Venice were determined to crush the Waldensian; and one day Gaspar had sold to his illustrious employer a beautiful manuscript, for which he had traded his rings to a sailor from Constantinople; and with his children he hurried back, by aid of the funds thus obtained, to the old home in the mountains.

Here in his mountain home we have found him, at the opening of this chapter. His wife's dust lay in Venice; his hands were a testimony to the fact that the printer had been lost in the herdsman, and the falling tear bore witness to the new sorrow which had befallen him.

He was living with the memory of a spring day which seemed only yesterday. Never had the valley appeared so beautiful as on that morning of which the herdsman was then thinking, in whose dewy loveliness he had started forth with little Ami and his baby sister, to find the missing goats. After he left the little roof which had sheltered him and the two children, it was a joy to watch the happy boy bound over the dashing streams which worried

their way amidst the rocks, and to pluck the fairest flowers for the child, whom, for love's sake, Gaspar carried in his arms.

They had not gone far, until the father's hand was full of flowers, before which the little girl's eyes were in an ecstasy. They were strangely colored orbs of loveliness. The variety of their color bespoke a many-sided and rich nature. The father could behold everything within them which in any way influenced or grew out of the solitary but seething intellectual life which he was living.

Nothing so holds the two realms — that of revelation which satisfies, that of mystery which charms and inspires — as human eyes behind and within which lives a soul. Gaspar saw in that child the whole majestic movement which he felt in his own breast.

He had named her Alke, "yearning;" and in those peculiarly eloquent eyes there was such longing, in her very cry such a persistent and hopeful struggle seemed to be uttering itself, so often in her babyhood she seemed to be gathering invisible sheaves from ideal harvest fields, so constantly now the lucent depth of her eye was but an indication of how far beyond her environment it sent its searching aspiration, that he was sure that she had been well named. The tremendous energies of the Renaissance were leaping lightning-like about the printing-room of Aldus Manutius, in Venice, when he quit work that night to go home and call her Alke! The resistless cry of the human soul for light and leading, which was then echoing over Germany and Switzerland, was pathetic in its longing, as he pressed her to his breast on the night her mother died, and felt in his very soul that this child was somehow bound up in destiny with the soul's demand, — Alke, "yearning."

Love had been wedded to learning, and religion had been allied with reform, in that name; and the child had a piteous sacredness that morning, when the little boy,

with proud affection, placed in her baby fingers a fringed gentian, blue as the sky above. And Gaspar wondered if all the tumult and strife of many swift and antagonistic streams would ever press upon the brain and strain the heart of Alke. As he felt the grandeur of the crisis at which he knew Europe had arrived, he unconsciously kissed the rosy lips of the child in his arms, called the boy from the edge of the abyss down into whose deeps he was gazing, and kissed him likewise, again and again, and then he stood listening for the wandering goats.

Alas, what a thrill of pain shot through his very soul, as he kissed that strong and beautiful boy! It was the strange horror of impending danger which made him kiss him the second time.

Gaspar could now detect that same pain about his heart still, as he sat there on that winter night, thinking it all over.

He remembered so vividly his saying to the baby, "Ami, dear little brother, Ami!" and looking at the innocent ignorance of Alke. He was not disappointed either; for the child did smile, drop her fringed gentian, and she patted the boy's cheek.

Ami was twelve years of age on that very day, and the father could not forget how he sat on a rock, which he saw had fallen lately from the height above, beholding the two playing together, — the boy so proud of the love with which this sweet three-year old caressed him. He remembered it all. The walk to the cottage of his friend, Nirval Arnaud's home, where the little Alke was left with the old grandmother; the whole past was so real that now and then, as he sat there, his feet moved, and the child on his breast was wakeful. The enthusiasm of Ami's spirit and the ardor of his more boyish imaginations had heard the goats up the mountain-side; but oh, the terrible cry of the mountaineers, as a few of them

shouted the news of the attack! Even yet it almost lifted Gaspar from his seat, as he remembered it.

It was the third charge of the papal cohorts within a year upon the Waldensians. Down they came, without pity, robbing the homes of fathers and sons, burning cottages, stabbing old men suspected of heresy, sparing only the aged women and the infants, — all in the name of the Holy Church!

Gaspar lived it all over again, as he sat with Alke in his arms; and the tear which fell into the golden hair was only one of a multitude which had fallen from the eyes which on that fatal day beheld one of that cohort — a French soldier who was clad as a knight — seize the terrified boy, who clung to his wounded father, tear him away, and strapping the child to his saddle, ride afar toward the valley, while the hills echoed with the hoof-beats of his horse and Ami's pathetic crying.

Ami was lost. The great gashes upon Gaspar's forearms were testimonies of the fierceness of the struggle. The child had died on the way to Paris; so Gaspar had found out, on his own recovery.

Ami thereafter had been but a holy memory, a stolen hope. The infernal power which had captured his boy and panted for Gaspar's life was left, — so was Alke; so also the Lord God Omnipotent. After all, he was not alone.

It had grown dark while Gaspar had recalled these events; and the little golden head had fallen over upon the strong arm, which now lifted her a trifle without disturbing the delicious sleep into which the child had fallen.

"How beautiful it is," thought Gaspar, "that, at least for a time in this life, a human being may fall asleep in the very presence of sleepless forces which arrange revolutions!" And just as he had muttered this to his half-wakened soul, he saw through the shadows which fell

thickly upon the snows, two men on horseback approaching his door.

Little did the Waldensian know that the word "revolution," which had just escaped his lips, would never be pronounced in after centuries save with the recollection of one of those tired travellers, and that he who was to be his guest that night had already done something to loosen the vast masses which would sweep, like the avalanche which Gaspar saw the day before, over the enormous area of human thought, and leave it ready for fresh growths and a new civilization.

As the strangers neared the cottage, Gaspar slowly arose; and with the tenderness of a mother, he put the little child on the cot nearest the open fire, which threw its streams of brilliant light out on the snow when he opened the door.

CHAPTER II.

STRANGERS AND FELLOW-CITIZENS.

> True dignity abides with him alone
> Who, in the hour of silent thought,
> Can still suspect and still revere himself.
>
> WORDSWORTH.

"TWO travellers," said the servant, who had alighted, "who are not sure of their way, and who will hope to find the best pass through the mountains by day, beseech you, good friend, to allow them to remain with you until morning."

Gaspar had once been lost in those mountains; and his experience and sympathy opened his heart and home. But before he could say a single word, his mind was employing itself in detecting tones in that voice like those he had heard so often at Venice, on the liquid streets, in the boats, and especially in the printing-room of Aldus. It was not light enough for him to attempt to make new acquaintances or to identify old ones, but he had certainly noticed a familiar method of pronunciation.

"What I have," said Gaspar, "is certainly at the disposal of any who on such a night and in such deep snows travel these mountain roads. Will you both come into my cottage?"

"I must thank you, my kind man!" said the other traveller, in dignified and somewhat lofty tones.

"This surely is not courtesy, but the very essence of humanity."

As he alighted, Gaspar was thinking where he had heard that voice. A hundred Venetians might have pronounced words, as did the servant who spoke first, but he had never but once heard a voice so full of culture, so eloquent with refinement, so suggestive of quiet power, as that which had just spoken, — never but once; and then in that dear old press-room at Venice, when one day with his eminent master, Aldus, he had looked, with one who was a stranger to him at that hour, at a rare manuscript.

"It cannot be," whispered Gaspar, "that I have lost my wits in this solitude, and that this memory of Venice makes my very ears its victim."

"I will attend to the horses very soon, when I am a little warmed," said the servant; and behind the master, who walked slowly and with evident weakness, he came into the little home which fairly glowed with welcome.

"Strangers that you are," said the host, "I can promise you some food, if it will not offend you to partake with me of bread made by my own hands;" and he made his way toward a huge jar which contained the provisions of the home.

A two-branched candlestick of peculiar beauty stood by the little sundial with which the child had been amused that afternoon; and it soon bore two lights, which revealed many more of the curious and interesting contents of this interior.

"Where could this mountaineer have obtained such a piece of household furniture as this?" silently queried the dignified stranger, as he beheld saucepans piled upon a metal boiler, and by its side a ewer of Oriental origin, and a pitcher, on which had been copied with artistic accuracy the scene of the burning of Girolamo Savonarola in St. Mark's, Florence.

"This," added he, in the silence of his thoughts, "is more like Florence than anything I have seen since leaving;" and speaking aloud, he said, "My good friend, I beg you know that whatever you have will be gratefully eaten by one so dependent on your hospitality and so fond as I am of your Piedmontese food."

Forthwith Gaspar produced a loaf of acorn bread, and proceeded to make a stew of rabbit and herbs, the very odor of which was a full meal to the youth, who by this time had provided for the horses.

"Never was prince better fed," was the remark of the older traveller, as he was half startled by finding beneath his hands, on the table where stood the bowl which Alke had but just emptied, a copy, exquisite, clear, and especially well bound, of the "Herone et Leandro" of Musæus, printed by Aldus in 1494.

Could it be possible that he was in a fairy realm? The only copy he had seen, outside of that famous printing-room of Aldus, was held carefully in the hand of Lorenzo de Medici's intellectual councillor and vicegerent, Pico della Mirandola. He dropped his bit of acorn bread, which he was eating, as his mind turned from that poor man's home, with its smells of bacon, bouilleux, pot-pourri, and garlic, to the palace of Lorenzo, where the learned and elegant Pico pored over his costly cabalistic manuscripts, and patted gently the "Herone et Leandro," with which Aldus Manutius had favored him.

It was now the turn of the stranger to wonder where in the world he had aforetime seen this man, his host. Something about the man took him back to the press-room of Aldus. He could almost see him there, amidst the newly discovered manuscripts and the workmen. Then, the drawing on the pitcher, — that was the Florence of Savonarola's day, an excited, mob-ruled, offensive Florence, from which every characteristic of the wondering man turned away.

"Ah," he thought, "Savonarola's death pictured in this man's home! I see it all. He is a Waldensian! I am in the home of one of the men who have for so long made this furor about reforming the Church."

He was thinking it over, while the youth who was his attendant was making some general remarks about the city of Turin and the snows which they had encountered on their way, when, at length, something occurred which made him sure that the roof of a radical and intense Waldensian was over his head.

The door had opened, and without ceremony a wild-eyed, ill-tempered old woman had entered, holding a huge wooden cross before her noisy tongue. She did not notice either of the strangers, but proceeded to berate the man of the house with bitterness and curses, while she attempted to pound him with this pious emblem.

"Stop!" said Gaspar, in a loud whisper. "Don't wake little Alke; she is just asleep. I will give you justice. Away with your missile!" as she threw it at him with all ner power.

"I'll have you cursed by the priest on the hill; and Saint Bridget herself will dry up your cows, and little Alke will starve! I'll tell the holy friars that you're heretical, and you will be burned alive!"

This last sentence she fairly shouted, while the baby slept sweetly, and the kind but irritated Gaspar pushed her toward the door, and gently held her with one hand, while with his other strong hand he gathered up the pieces of the broken cross. Soon he had compelled her to leave her curses behind.

"My friends," said the host, after he had closed the door, "I know you must feel that you have found an insecure lodging for the night. I am sure I cannot help this noisy creature from visiting me in this way. I must tell you, and I believe you," looking straight at the dignified stranger, who had his hand on the "Herone et

Leandro," — "I believe you are a gentleman of intelligence; this woman is — or rather let me begin with myself — I am not of her faith, as you see. She was my only help and the child's guardian, while I looked after the herds. I resolved yesterday to dismiss her. You may not share my opinions about matters of faith and doctrine, but I am not a believer in Saint Bridget, nor do I fear her influence with my cows. This woman had begun to teach my little child what are to me the superstitions of men."

Gaspar had gone farther than he had meant to go. These men might be spies, the forerunners of another of Leo's legions of extermination. He saw it all; but he faltered not. He was about to tell them what had occurred, when the man, whose hand had rested uneasily upon the book, spoke, —

"My worthy host, will you fear not? But — you are a Waldensian!"

"I *am*," answered Gaspar, and he looked the heroic soul he was, — "I *am;* and I am so much a hater of these monkish mutterings, that when this woman sat milking in the cow-house, saying, 'God and Saint Bridget bless you!' in order that she might save her head and the milk, I resolved to do the milking myself."

The stranger was astonished at his humorous and vigorous language, and again the press-room of Aldus came before his eyes; but he took up the other picture with Saint Bridget in the foreground.

"I shall be permitted to say that your confession of faith is safe in my keeping. We are not spies of the Holy Church; and on my soul, I am glad to be lost, if I may stay with such a frank heretic until morning. I can imagine that one who cares for a thing of this kind," holding up the book, "cannot fear the maledictions of Saint Bridget."

Gaspar had forgotten to put this book back in its

place, with other most precious volumes; and he was disconcerted when he saw the excited eye of his guest, as he held the little volume in his trembling hand. The mountaineer now became quite oblivious of the incident with the discharged servant, though he knew such an event as her discharge would probably arouse the priests to arrange another attack. He was fascinated with the sight of a man who understood the significance of such a fact as the discovery of that book in these scenes; he was also sure that he had seen that same eye kindle at least once before amidst associations of learning. For the moment Gaspar was tongue-tied. He did not dare to ask the name of his guest; and he had resolved to hide his own identity, if possible. Surely there was enough beside their own names which these two men could talk about.

"Will you let me know just where we are?" asked the youth. "We set out from Turin; and we are only sure of one thing, that we are glad to be here, although, as my master says, we are lost in the mountains."

Gaspar quickly saw that here were a scholar and his student, who were gracefully accepting the inevitable annoyances of such an experience; and he was resolved to be interesting and instructive as far as possible. He summoned his rusty scholarship to the task.

"This mountain," said he, "is the Vesulus of Virgil. Do you remember?"

"Indeed!" interrupted the master; and with greatest interest he quoted the words, —

> ". . . De Montibus altis
> Actus aper, multa Vesulus quem pinifer annos
> Defendit."

Gaspar was now sorry that he had thought it necessary to conceal his identity; but it was evident that the scholar wished to remain unknown to his host. Truly there never had been an hour in the life of this kindly host

when he wanted so badly to break every law of courtesy and ask for a name.

"You beheld the summit on the left, as you came out of Turin?" said Gaspar.

"Yes; and we are now a long distance from our route toward England," answered the youth.

"We are not far from good things," said his master; and turning to the mountaineer, he asked, "Did you ever hear of a manuscript of Virgil, in the Capuchin Monastery on the hill?"

"I have heard of nothing from the priests, save what I learned from one, a Venetian, a noble man, who did love books and detest monkish fables, who died of wounds when I lost my boy."

"Ah, good man, your own son? Do not allow us to invade your private woes. But it is a fresh sorrow, I am sure."

Gaspar had found intellectual and spiritual sympathy at the same moment; and anxious as he was to hide his own name, he told the story of the attack of the French cohorts of the Pope and of the capture of Ami.

Tears coursed down cheeks which in biographical portraiture have never been celebrated for the presence of anything like tears upon them. A heart which often seems to the reader of his life strangely empty of human sympathy, responded to this tale, especially when the mountaineer seemed to forget his surroundings, and said, —

"I hoped to see my boy a great printer, like Aldus Manutius, and I was promised a manuscript of Virgil by Fra Latrano; but the boy is dead, and the monks have concealed the parchment."

"My dear man," said the scholar, "our lives have met at vital and exciting points. I have journeyed many miles — I beg you, do not ask my name — with this my

youthful student to find and copy that very parchment. I have letters from Pope Julius II."

"Ah," said Gaspar, "we fear those who carry the messages or commands of his Holiness; they are swords for our hearts!" and he listened, as often had the Piedmontese, to hear the shouts of persecuting cavalry.

"I do not like a state of things in which an honest man who loves books trembles for his life," said the master.

"But books and honesty are dangerous companions now in these mountains. I could wish you were where you might not be murdered, at any moment, for the crime of simply saying what you have said. That is called heresy in these mountains," answered the host.

"It is heresy, damnable heresy," said the scholar, "to stifle honest thinking, to seize a child, carry him off to death, and hide the literature of Greece and Rome."

Gaspar felt the breath of both the Renaissance and the Reformation in his humble home. He knew he was entertaining a great man; but he saw what the world was soon to find out, — that this man's interest was in ideas and in scholarship, rather than in purposes and deeds.

Could it be that this man was the already illustrious Erasmus of Rotterdam?

"Let us talk of the manuscripts in the morning," said the tired scholar, feeling that it was necessary for him to rest, but feeling still more keenly that he had another page on the ignorance of monks, which he would not forget, to add to those he had already written on horseback and in inns, as they had been wandering from the route toward England.

Gaspar could not sleep that night. He resolved to tell the whole story of priestcraft, as he knew it, to a man whom he never suspected of being still in holy orders, of whom he had no slightest hint that in his pockets were pages, closely written, crowded with such satire on

monks as would make the world laugh and grow furious for at least three centuries.

"Certainly," he thought, "I can find out what is doing in the world, to make it less dark and less superstitious and cruel; I will get this, at least, from my guest when he wakes."

Little Alke alone slept soundly.

"Surely," said the sleepy scholar, "this is Perrin, the best printer of Venice. He was the pride of Aldus Manutius, — the man for whom he is yet mourning, the man who had to leave Venice to keep his life, the man for whose blood Count Aldani Neforzo set a hundred priests in search. I can comfort him on the morrow with news of light. A better day is dawning."

CHAPTER III.

A RECOGNIZED GUEST.

"Far o'er the steep the chalet glances dim,
Through clouds that gather on the glacier's rim,
And here a cataract in maniac wrath
And share of foam ploughs up its furious path,
But drained from fountains of eternal snow,
Converts to flowers the verdant vale below."

MORNING, as splendid as the fairest dream, broke upon the mountains. Far and wide the daytime unfurled radiant banners upon the everlasting hills, and the valleys were vast basins full of purple and crimson light. Monte Viso, white and inaccessible, caught the whole pageant, and detained it long upon her fiery crest. Lonely and majestic, Mont Cenis answered with streamers of light. The great river shone like a flashing streak of gold. The pines, of which Virgil sang, were hung with silver. Bells tinkled on the resonant air, and their music floated upward along the glassy steeps of hard snow. Everything became sublime to Gaspar, as he walked to the cow-shed without a fear of Saint Bridget in his ample soul.

When the scholar had risen and made himself ready for the day's journey, he found that the "Herone et Leandro" had disappeared; and he discovered further, to his soul's amazement, that a copy of the "Dante" of 1481,

by Baldini, occupied its place, next to the bowl, which had been washed thoroughly in the mean time.

"We are in the home of a most remarkable man," said the master to his pupil, — for such he was; "and I am confounded by the appearance of this 'Dante.' I had as soon expected a ghost."

The pupil said nothing, for he was still asleep; and the scholar soon saw that little Alke and he were dividing sweetmeats at the feast of slumber.

The nervous scholar, however, chattered on: "These marks are such as nobody but a Waldensian would make. Every line which scores the priests is noted; every page which stabs the Church is dog's-eared. A scholar and a heretic!" and his eye then rested upon that page in which Dante describes Benedict among the heads of the Holy Church: —

> "... My rule
> Is left a profitless stain upon the leaves;
> The walls, for abbeys reared, turned into dens;
> The cowls to sacks are choked up with musty meal.
> Foul usury doth not more lift itself
> Against God's pleasure, than that fruit which makes
> The hearts of monks so wanton."

When Gaspar came in, with a pail so full of milk that it was a task to keep the treasure within its bounds, the scholar saluted him with such attentive courtesy as made Gaspar feel again the atmosphere of the Venetian printing-room; and instead of saying the pleasant things he had resolved upon in the cow-house, he stood perfectly silent, with the smells of the stable upon him, the bucket still in his hand, while before his brain came the scene in the house of Aldus that night in 1503, on which the great printer received word that the "Hercules Ferens" of Euripides had been discovered. The second volume of the Euripides had gone to press. The printer was beset with doubt as to the genuineness of the manuscript, and as to the advisability of including the play in that edition.

Gaspar still held to the milk-pail, and stood stupidly, as it afterward seemed to him, staring backward over the years and into the fine face of Aldus. He was remembering how much Aldus desired on that night the privilege of a single hour with that manuscript in the presence of Erasmus. And now Gaspar really believed that Erasmus was bowing to him in his own cottage.

"I hope you did not find Saint Bridget interfering with the heels of your cows," said the scholarly stranger.

"No," answered the new milkmaid, "Saint Bridget seems to have left the premises. The udders of the cows were never more full."

The morning meal was excellent, if the eating could be regarded as proof of the pudding. Alke waked, smiled, and prattled, while the scholar tried to be pleasant to the little one, and at the same time to discover the name of this interesting man. Never did two men more laboriously seek to remain unrecognized each to the other; never were resistless sympathies rendering the accomplishment of such an end less probable. They fully canvassed the subject of the manuscripts, until it was evident that for some reason the stranger wanted to drop the subject.

"Your mountain has been celebrated by Virgil, and Dante has come into your cottage," said the stranger.

"Yes," answered the host. "Virgil and Dante were both prophets, though one was a Pagan and the other a Christian. When I was once in Mantua, I heard the service in church on St. Paul's day. You know the hymn which contains Saint Paul's words, spoken when he looked at Virgil's tomb: —

'Ad Maronis Mausoleum
Ductus, fudit super eum
Piæ rorem lacrymæ;
Quem te, inquit reddidissem
Si te vivum invenissem
Poetarum maxime.'

Virgil could never have written the fourth eclogue without having read Isaiah. Dante is like enough to that Hebrew iconoclast. I was told by one who knows the painter that when somebody upbraided Michael Angelo for sketching Julius, the Holy Father, in hell on the ceiling of his own chapel, he replied that Dante had done as ill by putting a pope in hell in his poetry. The change which Dante prophesies may be almost as great as that which Virgil saw coming."

"Scarcely," said the conservative stranger. "One was the dawn of a new faith; this will be only a peaceful transformation of opinions about the old one."

"It is not peaceful here," said Gaspar; and he held up his arms hacked by the butchers who had torn away his child.

"I sympathize with you," replied the scholar, with that same halting, equivocal, rationalistic fervor which never allowed him either to spare the Holy Church or to accept the cause of the Reformers, — "I sympathize with you in your sufferings, but the reform must come slowly."

"Did you ever see an avalanche move slowly?" asked the Waldensian. "Friend! there are too many winds in the mountains, and great steeps running downward into untold depths. This avalanche which has been loosened will not stop for anything."

"Do you believe an avalanche is really loosened, that the Church and the world are to suffer from a revolution?" asked the stranger, as he put particular emphasis on the suffering which would come with such an event as Gaspar seemed to contemplate.

A peculiar gesture made Gaspar sure that he was entertaining Erasmus. The earnest Waldensian felt now that the moment had come. He had forgotten about the manuscripts for which this scholar and his student had travelled to Turin; and now he believed that he could compel his guest to disclose his name. He stepped

to a little box which had served as a trunk in his travels from Venice to his mountain home; and he seized with trembling hands a book which he held up before the gaze of the wondering men.

"This," said he, as Alke toddled between his legs laughing and chattering, — "this is enough to break the ice-bands which hold a glacier. A man who writes a book like this in these times cannot help but expect a revolution. Enough energy is here to change things. For these opinions stood my father and his friends. We have been ignorant; this book is scholarly. But Peter Waldo of Lyons saw this truth;" and then the mountaineer read with a voice which had echoed through the mountains, the brilliant, sword-like sentences which filled the air of that room with lightning flashes.

No book could have so unfitted the scholar for an argument. How quickly he recognized the phrases! It was bewildering; but more, he was both deeply annoyed and altogether amazed. The red flush came into his thin cheeks as Gaspar read the passages which left much of the machinery of the Holy Church quite out of account in the development of the Christian life. At length Gaspar reached these sentences: "The most acceptable service which you can offer to the Virgin Mary is to endeavor to imitate her humility. If you must adore the bones of Saint Paul locked up in a casket, adore also the spirit of Saint Paul which shines forth from his writings."

His voice sounded like a trumpet. The scholar rose and walked to the closed door. Was it an effort to have him tell his name, or to criticise his attitude toward the Reformers?

Nothing could have more thoroughly distinguished the two men than this fact, — whenever the mountaineer read the passages in which Platonic ideas of human nature or the Roman stoicism figured, the guest was at ease; but

it was then that the host hurried on to the sentences which described the follies and disgraces of monkish life. One saw the morning through his brain, and, like a Hamlet, found his intellectual powers extracting the energy from his will; the other saw it through his conscience, and was at once an heroic soldier of reform.

Gaspar, still standing, read this passage with much force: "Tell me not this is charity, to be constant at church, to prostrate yourself before the images of saints, to burn wax candles, and to chant prayers. God has no need of these things. What Paul calls charity is to edify your neighbor, to esteem all men members of the same body, to think all are one in Christ, to rejoice in the Lord at your brother's welfare as if it were your own, to remedy his misfortunes as if they too were your own, to correct the erring gently, to instruct the ignorant, to raise the fallen, to comfort the cast-down, to assist them that are in trouble, to succor them that are in want; in fine, to direct all your powers, all your zeal, all your care to this end, — to do good in Christ in all to whom you can do good, in order that as he was neither born nor lived nor died to himself, but gave himself wholly for our advantage, so we also may serve our brother's needs and not our own. Were this so, there would be no kind of life more happy or more pleasant than that of those who have set themselves apart for the service of religion; which now, on the contrary, we find to be severe and toilsome, and filled with Jewish superstitions, nor free from any of the vices of the outer world; in some respects it is even more deeply stained."

"What," said the reader, — "what can stop the storm which those facts and truths will bring forth?"

At this the stranger seemed entirely disconcerted; and he said nervously, "That is a strange book."

"Yes," replied Perrin; "it is the kind of book which I would expect a scholar to write. All the forces of

scholarship have been melting the ice. The Church has been weakening in her authority before the advancing noonday which scholars have inaugurated by bringing in Greece and Rome upon her. It does not tell *all* the truth; but this book means everything to me."

In excellent humor as he was, Gaspar looked the listener in the face, and saw that he was excited and perplexed.

"It is full of the kind of revolution which I see plainly that you are afraid of. Did you ever read it?" gravely queried the Waldensian.

He handed the volume to the scholar, and watched his shrewd look; but the mountaineer had the victory. It was a copy of the 'Enchiridion,"—"The Christian Soldier's Dagger,"—written, as they both knew, by Desiderius Erasmus.

There was a good deal of oppressive silence before Gaspar went out to help the youth with his horses. The man who had just ordered them for the day's journey did not know whether he wanted to go or stay. He had promised the youth not to reveal his identity. He was resolved upon one thing more, to say nothing further about the manuscript to his host, unless the subject came up without his effort. True, he was disappointed at not finding it. They had travelled a long distance, and on the day before, they had been badly treated by the Capuchin monks, who, while they respected the Pope's letter, could not bring themselves to tolerate this particular guest. Nevertheless, the elder of the two travellers concluded not to refer to the subject. His mind was sufficiently employed on other matters. He must at once set out toward England.

He had fallen quite in love with this man and his cottage. There was an honest nobility in that curious cottager; and the little girl was beautiful. As they came to the door with the horses, Gaspar saw him kiss little Alke.

"What will this child do, if this spiritual avalanche does sweep over Europe?" thought the scholar; and the child smiled upon him as he took the "Dante" out of the little hands into which it had found its way, and placed there instead four bright coins.

"We are ready for the day's journey," said the youth, as he entered the cottage and found the scholar bundled up as well as he might be for such a contest with snow and cold.

"Scarcely ready," said the other, "until this most worthy man is paid as we cannot pay him."

"I am remunerated," said Gaspar, "by the honor you have done me. I am more than paid by the presence of so much learning and companionship. Possibly you may yet obtain that manuscript of Virgil. We may never see each other again. With this food, and these notes for your guidance which I have written, — for your route is difficult, — I enclose a hope that you will still melt the ice and help to loosen the avalanche."

"What, man?" said the scholar. "You still interest and perplex me. What can you signify?"

The mountaineer smiled upon the disconcerted scholar, as he slowly said, "It is a grave and shining hour, Master! You will have your part to act in this tragedy. It would be a comedy, only a feeble comedy, if it were only what you seem to expect. Scholar, and illustrious scholar that you are — "

"No; you must not mistake me."

"I do not," said the host, as the scholar mounted his horse. "I was in the room of Aldus once, and with you, I saw that Lucca manuscript. Farewell, Erasmus!"

Gaspar was right.

The scholar smiled, pulled the rein, stopped his horse for another instant, and said, "Farewell, and Heaven keep you and your child, Gaspar Perrin!"

CHAPTER IV.

AT AN ENGLISH ABBEY.

"All is silent now, — silent the bell
That, heard from yonder ivied turret high,
Warned the cowled brother from his midnight cell;
Silent the vesper chant, — the Litany,
Responsive to the organ: scattered lie
The wrecks of the proud pile, mid arches gray;
While hollow winds through mantling ivy sigh;
And even the mouldering shrine is rent away,
Where in the warrior weeds the British Arthur lay."

CLEAR and lustrous was the sky which hung over Glastonbury Abbey. Weary and silent were the two illustrious friends who toiled along, making on foot the last miles of a journey which stretched from Cambridge itself to Salisbury Plain, and thence to the ancient seat of St. Dunstan. They had tarried for three days at Stonehenge, leaving their horses and attendant; and they proposed to return to the interesting ruins as soon as this long-expected visit to the famous abbey might be concluded. As they journeyed along, the hitherto delicate health of Erasmus seemed to be improving; and it was with a delightful pride that Thomas More, at whose house he had remained many days, beheld a flush of growing strength upon the white and hollow cheeks of his friend. Long as had been the way from the cottage of Gaspar Perrin in the mountains to Cam-

bridge, the fact that the scholar had anticipated lodging with one who was so soon to take his place among the worthiest sons of fame as Sir Thomas More, quickened his pace and made the route delightful. He had finished the "Praise of Folly" at More's house; and the result had proved how exhaustive upon Erasmus had been even the fun and discussion which, evening after evening, its fresh pages had produced, as they had talked it over together.

Erasmus had often been invited to Glastonbury with any friend whom he might desire to bring with him; but this invitation had come in days when there was less interest in England in what had come to be called the "influence of the new learning." More had insisted upon this journey as a holiday, and had so held before his scholarly eye the prospect of seeing a monument of Druidical worship at Stonehenge on their way, and a recently obtained manuscript of the Roman age at Glastonbury Abbey, as to effect his desire with his guest. They had enjoyed the pilgrimage, and Erasmus was certainly stronger.

Long and interesting as had been their conversation concerning Stonehenge, the Druids and the Belgæ, and the tradition which makes the ruin which they had left behind a relic of Ambrosius, it was brief and spiritless enough as compared to that which they held when the noble walls of the Western Lady Chapel had, after a memorable visit with the Abbot Richard Beere, faded from their eyes and taken their places in the memory of these men.

Abbot Richard had long been anxious to entertain Erasmus, whom a short time before he had met at the court of Henry VII.; and strangely enough, when the unexpected guest whom Erasmus had brought with him at the entrance of the guest-house had received the kiss of peace by the hospitaller who was known as Brother

Lysand, the eyes of the intrepid Thomas More recognized as his host the very man who in Parliament had watched him so intently, when, as a beardless boy, in 1504, he had thwarted the plans of the king for a heavy subsidy. The abbot gracefully acknowledged his joy at their arrival, and even playfully referred to the first meeting of Erasmus and the already eminent young statesman.

"I was present," said he, with pardonable pride, "at the Lord Mayor's table not long ago, and had the good fortune to start the argument in which you found each other out."

"How was that?" quickly asked Erasmus.

"Well," said the abbot, "your own soul may be absorbed in study, to the joy or anxiety of all England and the enlightenment of the world, but you must not forget that occurrence. You remember it, I am sure."

And instantly it all came back to the scholar, — the heat of that debate, the silence at the table, the evident concern of the Lord Mayor, and the two short memorable sentences: "Aut tu es Morus, aut nullus!" cried out Erasmus. "Aut tu es Erasmus, aut diabolus!" exclaimed More.

It was easy, after such a beginning, for the conversation to glide along pleasantly. Behind it all, however, there was a distinct reserve upon the part of the Abbot of Glastonbury, whenever the state of the Church or the condition of English scholarship became its topic. The learned Richard Beere, powerful and yet timid, had become a conservative. He knew that Thomas More had been rightly accused of the dreadful sin of once having been devoted to the life of a monk, and of having fallen from a condition of ascetic rapture. He also remembered — for he had talked it over with no less a person than Thomas Wolsey at London — that Erasmus was the head and front of what was called "the humanistic movement," and, further, that it was conceived to be

the influence of Erasmus, who was ten years older than More, which had plunged the latter so deeply into what was called "the new learning."

Richard Beere had once been very friendly with Erasmus, but he now began to foresee consequences, flowing from his influence upon English thought, which were certain to unseat abbots and work undesired changes in the ecclesiastical life of the realm. However, he usually regained his feet in threading the difficulties which conversation opened, and became loquacious enough, when he sought to illustrate the history and grandeur of Glastonbury Abbey to two such scholars. He was proud of the sacred pile, and he was so wedded to institutionalism that he could not conceive of souls so strong in themselves as not to lose all thought of the value of the individual beneath a revered shadow.

"Possibly," said he to his friendly adviser, Brother Lysand, "these very heretics, if such they really be, may be drawn back to love, as never before, the warm breasts of the Holy Mother."

Abbot Richard had given instructions that the dinner should be delayed until the expected guest might arrive; and now the great refectory, which had so often been crowded with as many as five hundred guests, — a hall whose entertainment and board had been so often abused by the representatives of decayed titles with their multitudinous retinues, — opened its spacious doors with welcome to these two visitors. The two flights of stairs soon became two avenues filled with monks issuing from the cloisters; and as they entered the lavatory to perform their ablutions, Erasmus turned to More and said in a low voice, —

"Think of the number of men and of the amount of masculine energy of which monasticism has robbed the world."

"Probably they would have amounted to but little if

they had been out of this solemn prison," answered More.

"Their life is worthless now, certainly. The world would be poorer with them, if they were let in upon it, now that monkish mortification has extracted their manhood. But it has been a crime to withdraw from the world's work these vast armies of well-bred, healthful, and oftentimes devoted young men, who, since the days of Saint Anthony, have filled these monasteries and abbeys, and who have been rendered ignorant, superstitious, and immoral."

More was surprised to hear his friend — who, though often anticipating great changes in the Church, had always favored peace at any price — speak so strongly; and he was about to tell him as much, when the sub-prior rang the bell. The abbot drew them to a table at the upper end of the room; and they were seated, one on his right, the other on his left, near the priors and the other heads of the abbey.

Scarcely had the bell been rung, when the monks appeared, each bowing to the high table. More thought, with displeasure, that he had once been devoted to such useless genuflections. Erasmus remembered his own effort to drown the scholar within his own breast in a monastery near Delft.

The sub-prior gave bidding; seats were taken. Wearily did they sing the words of a psalm which in the real world would have sung itself into an anthem. With tiresome mechanism the brief service was performed, and the benediction was over. In a sepulchral voice, an asthmatic old monk, who now and then looked away over toward the guests at the risk of losing his place, began to read in Latin a portion of the New Testament, which portion proved to be of sufficient length to last during the entire meal. The soup had been uncovered; the cellarer was bowed in and out, and the dinner proceeded.

"Who, I pray you," said More, "who is this bright boy who seems to have the freedom of the whole abbey?"

"And never seems to abuse it," added Erasmus.

"Ah!" replied the abbot, as he smiled on him and gave recognition by a single nod of the head to one of the tables of the priests, near which the boy chanced to be standing, "that child may at some time be Abbot of Glastonbury." The abbot's eyes showed the passionate fondness of a father as he spoke. "He is born to do great things in the Holy Church. He is a grateful child, and some day he will know that the Church has saved him from an abominable life and damnation."

"Was he some bad little whelp whom you picked up in his villany?" asked Erasmus, with that quiet scorn and biting sarcasm which had not entirely exhausted itself in writing the "Praise of Folly."

"Oh, no!" answered the abbot, who shrugged his shoulders; "instead of that, he has been the purest and most truthful of children; and I sometimes feel that he cannot —"

"You do not mean," said the too quick and keen Erasmus, "that he cannot remain pure and truthful here in this holy atmosphere?"

The abbot did not feel the sword-thrust which Erasmus sent into the word "holy;" but one of the priests at the table nudged his neighbor, while the abbot said, "Quite the contrary; it was to keep him innocent and good that he was sent hither."

"To escape, as you were about to say, a severe damnation?" cruelly pursued Erasmus.

The Abbot of Glastonbury was a trifle worried; but he thought the whole story might enable him to extricate himself from toils which he could see were a delight to the sly and witty scholar. The child had moved nearer to their table, and he was very beautiful.

"The truth is," said Abbot Richard, with that assertiveness with which special and desperate pleading always begins, — "the truth is, this child — is he not a beautiful boy? — was sent hither by the holy friar Noglas, of Lutterworth. His father died only last year; and the child's mother, who was an angel of mercy and a lover of the Holy Church, survived her husband but a month. I wish I could think well of the boy's father." The abbot shook his head with every additional expression of sadness. "He is in the hands of the Infinite Mercy; and his whole fortune was divided, in order that incessant prayers might ascend for his salvation. The remnant of his fortune fell into the hands of his brother, who by a testament has been enjoined to guard it and to purchase the books — *O vanitas vanitatum!* — books which William Caxton has already printed, and — the pity is deeper when I think of it — the books also which a certain Aldus in Venice shall print. The whole remnant of the fortune may be wasted in this evil way. These books and some worn manuscripts, which we have good cause to suspect are vile and pernicious, are to be given to the boy — *Vian* is his name! — when he comes to later years. The boy's surroundings were bad enough so long as his father lived. The holy friar Noglas wrote us that his father actually met, at hours which must lead to suspicion, with those detestable and godless Lollards of Lutterworth, who, since the days of the arch-heretic John Wycliffe, have beset Lutterworth with ill. To save the child, his mother desired him to be sent hither. He is our child; and the saints forefend us against misleading such an one."

As the abbot spoke, More remembered a home which he and Erasmus had just left, the beauty of which history has not allowed to be forgotten; and as the monks who sat near were silent, he thought of the streams of fatherhood which had been imprisoned within the walls of such

institutions, and that, after all, it was not strange that, sacred as they were, they bred immoralities and abuses without number.

As they passed by the seven long tables at which stood the priests and lay-brethren, each the easy master of impressive etiquette, the "Miserere" was sung; and Vian came close to the abbot, who gently stroked his forehead and took his hand.

In the morning Erasmus saw the boy in the abbot's apartments, and was amused to find him employing himself in rubbing a piece of parchment smooth with chalk and pumice-stone, — articles which the youth speedily concealed when Abbot Richard entered. The reason of this instant concealment was apparent to Erasmus when the abbot had sent the boy on an unimportant errand to the sacristy, and when he proceeded to say, —

"The chalk on the youth's frock gives me pain."

"The child will probably be a scholar," said Erasmus, dryly.

"I fear that he will be misguided by those who have age and have not sufficient faith."

"Age," said the scholar, "is not likely to destroy actual faith; it does often dissolve dreams, however."

"Alas! men oftener lose their souls with losing their dreams," replied the abbot. "We are losing too much and too rapidly. The Holy Church is pursued by enemies who ought to be friends. In the race she is flinging aside precious garments, and will soon be unclothed. If I had my way at Rome, she would stop her flight, and even with the points of swords, turn her pursuers back. I do not like to have Vian copy the manuscripts of wicked and pagan Rome. The chalk on his frock shows that he is under evil influences."

"I cannot imagine evil influences in such a holy place as this abbey," said Erasmus, with painful irony.

"Ah!" replied the abbot, "I am beset with doubting

monks and many cares, but the severest of all is my care that my monks shall be kept from sinful familiarities with what is called 'the new learning.' Vian shall be shielded from the wickedness of unbelief."

The truth is that Vian had already copied, with an artistic elegance quite marvellous in a boy, a manuscript of Lucian, which had been brought secretly from Italy by the old monk Fra Giovanni, whose reading of the Scriptures at the dinner was so interrupted by asthma and his inclination to observe the guests. One of the monks, into whose care Vian had been committed by the abbot, had an interest in this Latin author of which the abbot had no suspicion; and the boy had been allowed to amuse himself and obtain favors from his friend, by working in an aimless but interested way, as Abbot Richard Beere supposed, but really in a way most perilous to the abbot's plans, at pens, knives, parchment, inks, chalk, pumice-stone, and, most significant of all, this manuscript of Lucian's "Mycillus."

"He has copied a dialogue from Lucian," said the abbot, with evident displeasure.

The remark struck Erasmus with force, as he saw that the abbot knew that Erasmus himself, nearly nine years before, had translated some of Lucian's severest strictures on the philosophers of his day, and that the "Praise of Folly," which certainly the abbot had not seen, and which he certainly would read with pain, had already impressed his friend Thomas More as a satire conceived against the monks, and owing much of its point to the author's acquaintance with the earlier master of ridicule at Samosota, Lucian. Erasmus already anticipated the judgment of subsequent literary criticism; he was to be called the Lucian of the sixteenth century.

"Why, Lucian?" said he to the intent abbot. "Lucian is sure to sharpen his wits. Your Reverence cannot be uninterested in his satire. You have in his dialogue a

cock talking with a cobbler, his master, more ludicrously than any professional jester, and yet more wisely than the vulgar herd of divines and philosophers in their schools, who, with a noble disdain of more important matters, dispute about pompous nothings."

"But this is no time for jests, though they be clever. The habit of jesting about the Holy Church will grow out of Vian's copying Lucian's dialogue. He is a young master of Latin. He really enjoys his reading; I overheard him laugh as he wrote. He was copying that passage which shows the panic in the Pantheon, when the Olympian deities find out that men no longer have faith in them. It must have been that he laughed at what he had just read. I think it was his feeling of how ludicrously they behaved when they thought that, as gods, they would live no longer, that amused him. I feel that he may get a habit of amusing himself with sacred things. Some wickedly affect to believe that the Holy Church has some practices and certain beliefs which are, as you say, 'pompous nothings.' The saints preserve Vian from falling into the habit of jesting with things as ancient and holy as are the papacy, the confessional, and the priesthood!"

Erasmus detected a certain pathos in this position. He knew full well that many revered institutions could not endure jesting. Even the attitude of Richard Beere had been partially transformed, as he had contemplated the possibilities in the immediate future. He appreciated the solemn faithfulness which this timid conservative showed. He himself had begun to quail a little at the possible results of ridiculing the clergy and their ignorant impiety. But the "Praise of Folly" was written; and such men as Abbot Richard must now hold the reins over the horses which the noise would frighten. Vian and such bright boys surely would get hold of it in the abbeys; and he felt concerned a little oftentimes, as he

thought that as surely as this boy had laughed at the old philosophy of Rome as he read the pages of Lucian, such as he would not only laugh, but grow sceptical about the Romish Church as they read the "Praise of Folly." He pitied the shy and painful conservatism of this abbot, and he resolved that if he obtained an opportunity — which, by the way, never came — he would caution Vian against supposing that anything else in the world was really as worthy of being made fun of as was the old philosophy. One thing he would be careful about, — he would not annoy his host with his own doubts about the Church, his own knowledge of her weakness and crimes, and his own sure hope that when Abbot Richard had been dead a long while, Vian and others like him would be led in the triumph of "the new learning."

All the resolutions of Erasmus had those alarming defects which come from a weak will and a lively intelligence.

CHAPTER V.

UNPLEASANT VISITORS.

No man e'er felt the halter draw
With good opinion of the law.
TRUMBULL.

MORE came into the vaulted room just as the abbot and Erasmus had partaken of the excellent beer which was brewed by the monks of Glastonbury. After sipping a little more, and remarking upon its good quality, they started, with the proud head of the institution, to look at the interesting and sacred relics. Old Fra Giovanni, breathing whispers to Vian, who came close to Abbot Richard, came and went with surprising freedom, as they proceeded from spot to spot. This beautiful youth amidst these ancient buildings, this fresh boyhood in this atmosphere of antiquity, — the contrasts and the suggestions made the scholar and the statesman silent. Abbot Richard, however, talked incessantly.

"For fifteen centuries and more, the cross has stood on this spot; and yet some fear that base men will some day be wicked enough to raze these buildings to the earth. The saints forefend us!"

He listened for a reply, but Erasmus said only this: "There will be no change but for the better, I am sure."

"Ah, if I could be sure!" urged the abbot. "Heretics are everywhere, and kings are silent. Would that the sword were drawn but once! they would disappear."

"Nay," said More; "ideas alone may conquer ideas. Saint Peter once drew his sword; and his Master bade him sheath it again."

"Yes, good friend!" added Erasmus; "ideas cannot be swept back by institutions, — for institutions are only the forms of old ideas."

He was just going to say that new ideas often supplanted them with new institutions, when the abbot, somewhat nettled, said, "And what if these old ideas be true ideas?"

"Then," cautiously replied Erasmus, — "then they need no swords; they and their institutions will stand forever."

"Ah!" said the abbot, "the Holy Church is an institution of God, not the embodiment of any human ideas."

Thomas More remembered the story of the young Christ as the "Son of Man" standing in the temple and saying, while Sabbath and temple were being transformed, "A greater than the temple is here."

Erasmus said meditatively, in Vian's hearing, "Even the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath," — and he wanted to say that man was God's child, and dearer to Him than all else; but they were nearing Glastonbury Thorn.

The abbot was eloquent; and Vian wondered at what was sure to be plain to him at a later day, — what could Master Erasmus have meant by that quotation about the Sabbath which the boy had already seen in the Vulgate?

"This is but an ordinary bush to profane eyes," said Abbot Richard, as if he would prevent any outburst of rationalism and irreverence on the part of Erasmus, whose words, especially when spoken in Vian's presence,

he dreaded; "but it is something else to the eye of history and to the heart of faith."

"Sometimes, your Reverence, the over-zealous heart of faith makes the eye of history very near-sighted," remarked the unimpressible scholar.

It was a thrust which the abbot was glad Vian did not notice; but it nearly staggered the credulous and loquacious Churchman.

"Have I invited these heretics to my abbey, that this promising child may be ruined?" thought the pious Abbot Richard.

Erasmus was sorry he had said so much; but his scholarly spirit was full of rebukes which he did not utter against the ignorance intrenched even in this abbey.

He had been annoyed at Giovanni's reading at dinner, as he reiterated some of the most palpable errors of the Vulgate. The erudite visitor was at that time at work on the critical edition of the Greek Testament, which was to appear in 1516. This audacious impiety the abbot had already set down against Erasmus. He had however failed to change the attitude of the scholar by hospitality. Even in the presence of Glastonbury Thorn he replied to the hot questions of the abbot, — "Would you presume to correct the Holy Ghost? Are you the enemy of the Church?"

Erasmus simply said, as often he was accustomed to say: "Can there possibly be any worse enemies of the Church than the godless pontiffs who silently suffer Jesus Christ to be rejected, — binding him by their mercenary adherents, traducing him by forced interpretations, and strangling him by their pestilent morals."

"I, in spite of your contumacious words, am the adherent of his Holiness," spoke the abbot, with a flashing eye.

Vian came close to the revered head of Glastonbury,

and trembled. The boy felt that something which his Reverence prized highly was endangered.

"And every lover of truth, my gracious host, is an adherent of Him who is the truth," trenchantly added Erasmus.

The Abbot Richard was silent for an instant, as though puzzled with this audacious phenomenon, — a man of the Renaissance aglow with fire for a reformation. Then he asked, as he sent Vian away, —

"What would you do with your Greek Testament?"

"I desire," gladly answered Erasmus, — "I desire to lead back to its first teachings the cold wordy thing called 'theology.' Would that this labor might bear as much fruit for Christianity as it has cost in effort and application!"

The conservative Churchman shrugged his shoulders once more, and began again to talk about the relics of Glastonbury. They were now standing near the thorn.

"Do wicked men doubt the miracles of the Holy Church? Here is a living miracle."

"And this," said Erasmus, as he touched its green leaves, — "this is the withered staff of Saint Joseph of Arimathea, in whose grave lay the dead Christ? Do you not think that the devotions paid to the slips from this tree, which slips I have seen in other lands, healing the sick and filling the pockets of the priests with coin, do entomb the Lord again, so that the Holy Church has even now a Christ in the sepulchre?"

Vian, who had joined them again, looked up with the wondering eyes of a thoughtful boy; and Abbot Richard, affecting to be ignorant that the scholar had asked a pointed question, told the story, presumably for the instruction of the boy.

It was this. Joseph of Arimathea was wealthy, and a member of the Sanhedrim. At the death of Jesus his proffered tomb was the testimony to his ardent disciple-

ship. Of course he was banished. Adrift for long months in a boat without sails or oar, he landed at last, with Philip, Lazarus, Martha, and Mary, at Marseilles. Joseph became missionary to Britain; and, tossed shoreward in Bridgewater Bay, he and his cause became possessed of twelve hides of land, by the tolerant generosity of King Arviragus.

"Up this very hill," said the abbot, "did he climb, from the morasses and fogs below. With tired feet, on this spot he ended his journey. It was Christmas Day. 'We are weary all,' he cried out; and he struck his staff into the earth, and fell to praying and thanking God."

"So," said More; "it is called 'Weary-all Hill.'"

"And so," said the abbot, grateful that More was at least modest in his scepticism, — "and so the wild men who crowded about the saint were quite powerless to do him harm, as were the lions over Daniel. From that hour, every Christmas Day, this staff of the holy Saint Joseph has given forth its verdure and its blossoms, perfuming the airs which reach the abbey."

"Was the staff of Joseph a shoot from the tree out of which the true cross was made?" asked the author of the "Praise of Folly," with an irritating innocence of manner.

"Ah!" said Abbot Richard, entirely satisfied with the rising faith of Erasmus; "we know not. The walnut-tree yonder is covered with leaves on each Saint Barnabas' Day."

"Both of these trees must produce a fine revenue for Christ's poor priests; for they sell the slips of the thorn at wicked prices elsewhere. And I am told by our good friend here that crowds come to create a carnival when the walnut-tree puts forth its leaves."

To this suggestion of the money-making tendencies of the monks, the abbot made no reply. He could not

enjoy his visitor; he was discouraged, and spoke less to the scholar and more to his friend More. Silently they walked back to the chapel.

The twisted withes, of which John of Glastonbury has spoken, had long ago given place to something more elegant and substantial; but they were living and fragrant in the conversation of the abbot, as he spoke of the chapel and the arches.

Never quite willing to confront all the results of the influence of "the new learning," More was interested to hear this loyal Churchman and Englishman, as he anticipated the architectural writers of later periods, insisting, as he did, that the Gothic order of architecture was not an importation from France or Italy, but that it owed its origin in England to the imitation of the wicker-work of which the Chapel of St. Michael, connected with the Glastonbury Abbey of the past, was constructed.

"Interlacing willows, which first wound around the posts, were the earliest suggestions of the intersecting lines of groined roofs," said his Reverence.

"So easily," said Erasmus, "do institutions grow with the growing life of mankind, that there always seems some fact handy to our minds over which, as over a bridge, the ambitious thought may go to some greater fact. I wonder if we are not now, in Europe, about to leave for a while the making of chapels and cathedrals, for the founding of schools like Master John Colet's in London?"

The very name of John Colet of St. Paul's roused the already excited abbot to eloquent ire. He had known him as a "humanist;" and much as at times he had sympathized with learning, to be a devotee of his peculiar ideas was worse for Colet, in the judgment of Richard Beere, than if he had been a scoundrel. The abbot now looked upon John Colet's visit to Italy, years before,

as an event of sad import to the orthodoxy of English Christendom.

Certainly the great Oxford scholar had come back with a love for the Christian element in Neo-Platonism which made him very tolerant toward Florentine efforts at philosophy, and with a holy anger against ecclesiastical vice which made him intolerant toward much that was essential in the mind of Richard Beere. Colet had not yet founded St. Paul's School; but Erasmus knew that the abbot understood his plans, and that this school was the most hopeful prophecy in the brain of an Englishman.

"That unhappy day when John Colet brought heresy into England, has shadowed the Church and throne," said the abbot. "May the saints save such as these" — placing his hand upon the head of Vian — "from his baneful influence! He has perverted the Scriptures; he has assailed the Church."

"If the Church is on the rock, even hell may not shake her," said More.

"If she is not upon the rock," added Erasmus, "the truth uttered by wise and brave men may compel her to find the rock."

It was two against one, and the abbot was becoming furious. "Come with me! Come with me!" he cried.

In his haste and petulance, he had forgotten to send Vian upon another errand. The boy clung to More, half afraid of the abbot.

They entered the Lord Abbot Richard's dwelling. Erasmus sat behind a mullioned window, overhung with fine tracery in stone. He was perfectly serene. The abbot read aloud: "If he be a lawful bishop, he of himself does nothing, but God in him. But if he do attempt anything of himself, he is then a breeder of poison. And if he also bring this to birth, and carry into execution his own will, he is wickedly distilling

poison to the destruction of the Church. This has now, indeed, been done for many years past, and has by this time so increased as to take powerful hold on all members of the Church; so that unless that Mediator, who alone can do so, who created and founded the Church out of nothing for himself, — therefore does Saint Paul often call it a 'creature,' — unless, I say, the Mediator Jesus lay to his hand with all speed, our most disordered Church cannot be far from death. . . . Men consult not God on what is to be done by constant prayer, but take counsel with men, whereby they shake and overthrow everything. All — as we must own with grief, and as I write with both grief and tears — seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's; not heavenly things, but earthly; what will bring them to death, not what will bring them to life eternal."

"Who spoke so truly and so well?" inquired the scholar, who was certain that he detected in those words the soul and manner of John Colet.

"The wicked heretic whose name you have brought to this place," sharply answered Abbot Richard.

"On my soul," said the serene More, "you would love John Colet, did you but know him as I do."

"I cannot love, and I *will not know*, the enemies of the Church. You heard the words which I read. Such words against her Supreme Head are worthy of death. Oh, these are days of peril!"

In vain did More attempt to reconcile the troubled and dogmatic abbot to the fine and noble character of a man whom More loved so well and honored so thoroughly. In Colet was the Renaissance as it began to blossom into the Reformation; and Abbot Richard was against "the new learning" the moment it looked toward disturbing the Church. In Colet was the quiet power of the Reformation, which was sure to be unquiet elsewhere; and the head of Glastonbury Abbey would

meet it with a sword. The kings who courted either "the new learning" or the reform were untrustworthy; the priests who recognized either, he would expel from the abbey!

Yet he knew that this latter course was not prudent, even if it were possible. He had often stood in solitude by Glastonbury Thorn, and wondered what to do. No poet has estimated his difficulties.

> "The miracle we now behold,
> Fresh from our Master's hand,
> From age to age shall long be told
> In every Christian land,
> And kings and nations yet unborn
> Shall bless the Glastonbury thorn."

That was a mere statement of a rhymester. He felt the beauty of such a hope, and the difficulty of its realization, ages before the poet's birth.

No one of her abbots had added lands, or builded so largely upon and with the past, as had he.

> "Still farm to farm, and park to park,
> They added year by year,
> From hills that heard the soaring lark,
> To lowly marsh and mere;
> But still they cried, 'The space is small
> For an Abbot of Glastonbury Hall.'"

He felt that all that had been created there to the honor of religion was permanent. In the hour when doubt besieged the castle, he would add to its strength and glory. Here, where they who first brought the gospel to Britain had solemnly woven twigs and prayed beneath a thatched roof, Richard Beere saw at last sixty acres covered with noble buildings. As often as he felt the breath of the Renaissance or heard the thunder of the Reformation, had he gone to Parliament House as the proudest of spiritual barons, or seated himself within his elegant court, where the sons of royalty and nobility

bowed before him; or perhaps he gathered about him a hundred men of noble birth, mounted on mettled steeds and clad in luxurious garments, making up his retinue, as he set out for a synod; or perhaps he then conceived or executed a plan for some such elaborate addition to the buildings as should demonstrate the unshaken confidence which her most conspicuous English abbot possessed in the character of the present ecclesiastical machinery. He knew not that colossal edifices, dogmatic utterances, and persecuting ardor are the infallible signs which ideas make of their evanescence.

He was proud to stand with the builders of these solemn arches and the collectors of these innumerable relics, as he repeated their names and recounted their achievements. If the friends of Joseph of Arimathea had built the little wicker-work church, and if they had, at the suggestion of the angel Gabriel, as he believed, dedicated it to the Blessed Virgin, and buried the bones of Joseph there, he had bound the destinies of Church and State together by erecting the King's apartments. If, nearly fourteen hundred years before, the ancient and decayed wattled church had been replaced by the labor of the pious hands of Saints Phaganus and Duravanus, and, as the result, there had been dedicated another to Saint Michael the Archangel, Abbot Richard had erected that lovely shrine, known as the Chapel of Our Lady of Loretto. Where the twelve anchorets which Lucius had placed on the island, to live for the most part on bread and water, and to adorn piety with the painful seclusions of asceticism, had conquered the Druids, there the traveller of to-day sees the small almshouse and chapel for women. Abbot Richard's mitre hangs yet over a full-blown rose, both mitre and rose having been cut in stone making an armorial supported by greyhounds and dated 1512.

The abbot pointed out these new buildings to Erasmus

and More, unconsciously suggesting that they were most excellent testimonies to the vitality of his faith.

"When the new learning is dead," he customarily had said to Brother Lysand, who always agreed with his orthodoxy of belief, and drank largely of his most delightful wines, "then that escutcheon will be still surmounting the entrance."

They were now standing at the entrance of St. Benedict's Church, near the vase which held the consecrated water; the abbot had pointed to the initials above, "R. B.," and his eye was still fixed upon the mitre and garter which surmounted the escutcheon.

"You would lessen my authority," said the abbot, as he saw Erasmus assume the attitude of a man simply tolerant of the opinions of his proud host.

"No," answered the scholar. "I beg you to know that the authority you have over these men seems to be gracious and beneficent. But even above an abbot and numerous ceremonies, is the authority of Christ. The escutcheon will fall, if the foundation of St. Benedict's Church be not that of the Holy Apostles."

"I would not have the boy Vian live in the midst of such faithless reasonings. Scholar that you are, the wisdom of this world has misled you."

Erasmus smiled. His friend saw a sword glitter in that smile.

At this juncture More thought he saw a chance to reconcile two men whose antagonism of thought and conviction had made courtesy almost impossible.

"The boy must get accustomed to the daytime," replied he to his own questions. And then he said to the abbot: "The new learning has come. I believe it will remain. But Erasmus and I do not agree in all things. Master Erasmus and I had a controversy this day. I fear with you, Lord Abbot, that some of the foundations of the holy faith may be touched profanely."

The abbot was more than delighted. His loneliness was gone. Thomas More and Erasmus had found a difference of opinion on religious matters! It might lead to the discrediting of the influence of the former in England. More was growing more powerful every day. Abbot Richard really distrusted and certainly feared this wily and scholarly friend of More. He was provoked that in Church and State he was so highly honored. More's politics he also detested. But he could endure anything from his faithlessness as to the king's authority, if only he found him a substantial and loyal Churchman in this crisis. The only thing against More, in the abbot's mind, was his close association with the men of the new learning. He was rejoiced that he and Erasmus had found themselves in controversy at Glastonbury. The solemn grandeur of the abbey had exercised a beneficial influence on the young politician. Dare the wily foreigner make him a laughing-stock in his writings, if Thomas More could be found on the abbot's side in the debate? The abbot became both cheery and dogmatic.

"Believe that you eat and you do eat," said More, who, in an argument on the real presence of Christ in the consecrated wafer, had been worsted, and now began again, this time in the presence of the abbot, to insist upon the power of faith.

"Yes; well said! Truly spoken were those brave words, Thomas More! Be not fearful in the presence of a great scholar. How great is faith! how great is faith!"

The abbot was full of glee, as he spoke; but Thomas More, who knew that there was no argument in the dignitary's hilarity in discovering in him an opponent of Erasmus on the doctrine of transubstantiation, who also felt that perhaps he had said all that could be said on that side, who saw clearly that Erasmus was as calm and self-

possessed as is a trained army in the field against a single company of raw recruits, was ominously silent.

The abbot spoke again: "The whole substance of the bread and wine is without doubt converted into the Body and Blood of Christ. Let him who doubts it know that his soul has forfeited the propitiation of Christ himself."

Erasmus was still calm and silent. Vian brought a flower and placed it in the thin white hand of the scholar.

More was uneasy lest the abbot should go too far. He knew how undisturbed was the mind of his friend. He could not bear, however, for his own mental comfort, to see him practically excommunicated by the ardent abbot.

In every way Erasmus was superior to Richard Beere. He could not endure any lordly assumption of moral or mental governance upon the part of the abbot. They were his guests; but now the fire of theological controversy threatened to destroy all friendly relations. More than this, was Thomas More quite aware that the abbot had made astonishing revelations of the weakness of his positions. He knew the abbot had not hitherto thought well of him, because in Parliament he had defeated the plans of his royal benefactor Henry VII. It was amusing and disgusting to him that all his own political faults had been instantly pardoned, so soon as he was found to be in some way antagonistic to the dangerous iconoclasm of Erasmus the theologian. He also remembered that Erasmus in previous conversations, when no hospitable abbot was present to be treated with courtesy, had addressed to him arguments as to the falsity of the church idea of transubstantiation which he had been unable to answer. He now discovered that the learned abbot, who was trained in theology, was no better prepared for these volleys which were sure to come than he himself had been. He dreaded to have Erasmus open his mouth again. Great buildings and a proud

abbot were no refuge against the storm which this man was helping to bring upon the corruption and dogmatism of the Church. One sentence occupied his mind, — "Believe that you eat, and you do eat;" and it seemed very unsatisfactory to the young statesman.

To his infinite relief, Erasmus began to speak of the beauty of the chapel, which stood before them on Tor Hill. It had been dedicated to Saint Michael the Archangel. Even yet one may see the figure of the archangel powerfully sculptured above the portal of the remaining tower, as he weighs in a pair of balances the Devil against the Bible. Erasmus gazed upon the figures for a moment, and discovering an attendant imp trying to pull down the scale in which the Devil sits, dryly said, —

"My Lord Abbot, is the name of that imp, Ignorantia, — the ignorance of the priesthood? I see he is making the Bible to appear very light in the scale."

More felt that a newly discovered and most unpleasant quality of the mind of Erasmus had disclosed itself. He was surprised and annoyed that this man of culture, who often desired peace at any price, who so thoroughly detested revolution, should prod the hospitable abbot with such sharp questions. Erasmus, on the contrary, was for once consistent. He proposed to reform the opinions of the Church from within.

The abbot was silent, save to mumble words of gratitude that Vian was far enough away to miss hearing that question; while More openly but affectionately reproved Erasmus, largely for the reason that he would soothe the wounded soul of Richard Beere.

"I suppose," said Erasmus, "it is true to say, 'Believe I am honest in my question, and I am honest,' or 'Believe that that little stone imp up there is the ignorance of our clergy, and it is the ignorance of our clergy;' but I have better reason and surer faith than that which

kneels before a consecrated wafer and says, ‘ Believe that you eat, and you do eat,’ when I say that no other power is making the Bible so light and useless as the ignorance of the priests of the Holy Church.”

Vian had now come close to the trembling and irritated abbot, and he heard the deliberate statement of the scholar.

“ Even if you believe it, it is perilous wickedness to proclaim it,” said the abbot, with petulance.

“I proclaim it inside the heavy and strong walls of an abbey, and to the Lord Abbot of Glastonbury. I have written of the sin and ignorance of the monk. He complains that his authority is lessened by our means, and that he is made a laughing-stock in my writings. The fact is, he offers himself as an object of ridicule to all men of education and sense; and this without end. I repel slander. But if learned and good men think ill of a man who directs slander at one who has not deserved it, which is it fair to consider the accountable person, — he who rightly repels what he ought not to acknowledge, or he who injuriously sets it afoot? If a man were to be laughed at for saying that asses in Brabant have wings, would he not himself make the laughing matter? However, I must be silent, because Thomas More and you agree on one philosophy: ‘ Believe that the asses of Brabant have wings, and the asses of Brabant have wings.’ ”

Vian, poor child, was very thirsty; and the abbot gladly led the way to the spring which, ages before, had refreshed the thirsty Saint Dunstan.

“ Foolish journey for the boy ! ” said Erasmus to More, quietly, seemingly careless when he knew the youthful face was illumined with a glowing interest in what he then said: “‘ Believe that you drink and you do drink.’ Oh, Thomas More ! I have not sufficiently praised folly.”

CHAPTER VI.

A NOVICE AND FUGITIVE.

"To the island-valley of Avilion,
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
Deep-meadowed, happy, fair with orchard-lawns
And bowery billows crowned with summer sea."

No wonder your school raises a storm, for it is like the wooden horse in which armed Greeks were hidden for the ruin of barbarous Troy. — *From More's Letter to John Colet.*

ABBOT RICHARD was called to attend to some of the duties connected with his high position. Fra Giovanni, whose reading of the Vulgate we have heard at dinner, and whose uniform kindness and curious tales had already bound Vian to him with closest affection, came to show to the guests other interesting relics of the abbey.

Coughing continually and smiling at all times, he trudged along, with the hand of Vian in his own, making himself quite agreeable, and rapidly becoming more interesting to Erasmus than were even the shirt of Gildas and the coffins of Arthur and Guinevere.

Giovanni had a strange history. The name announced not only his Italian extraction, but much the same uncertainty of family connections as is suggested by the commonest of names. It is doubtful whether he

would have been owned by any family of Rome, which city had been his birthplace, or whether his independent and self-sufficient soul would have willingly identified himself with even the proudest family whose name was known by the Cæsars. He was of fine ancestry, so far as the aristocracy of brains and culture might go. He knew himself to be the unacknowledged son of a certain Italian cardinal, whose features were most marvellously reproduced in his own face, and whose passionate love for the classic arts and classic letters was an enthusiasm, if not a worship, in the soul of his child.

All this Erasmus also knew, from a clerical friend in Venice, who had known Fra Giovanni at the papal court. The scholar had also been informed that the Italian had, in 1508, been persuaded by the Pope himself to go to England for a consideration in the shape of certain manuscripts and books of almost priceless value, which he was allowed to take with him. And further, Erasmus knew that Abbot Richard Beere had, for a consideration also, agreed to make him at home at Glastonbury.

The real reason of the Pope's desire that Fra Giovanni should be out of Italy lay in this, — that, unluckily for his Holiness Julius II., the eye of this active monk had beheld certain letters which had passed between a certain enemy of Maximilian and the Pope, — letters of which no one had previously had knowledge, save the Pope, death having partially hid the secret in the grave of the correspondent, — letters, it must be added, whose character and witness were so against his Holiness as to demand the death or banishment of any beside the Pope who might have read them. With the art of a trained politician, the Pope had also accomplished the purpose of having, as he supposed, close to the ear and lips of the most powerful abbot in England, a trusty and yet not too pious servant. Richard Beere was compensated, although this same Fra Giovanni would often annoy him,

as the Pope knew. Italy, at least, would be free from a curious monk, whose secret would not be told; and perhaps the same prying curiosity which had made such discoveries in the house of the Pope might be able to obtain secrets equally valuable to the papal chair, from an abbot whose place in Parliament and at the court of Henry VII. was powerful.

The truth was that Fra Giovanni had not been in Glastonbury a month, before he was the abbot's master. His ability to discover a skeleton in some closet, and to stand near unto it, pointing out to the guilty and knowing ones how easily he could create a perfect bedlam in the room of existent serenity and happiness, was never so self-conscious nor so autocratic as now.

Scandalous stories had been in circulation concerning two of the priors to whom Abbot Richard had been under long and painful obligations. Fra Giovanni found out every detail of the affair, and gave the frightened priors sufficient information to make them miserable and obedient. A wretched series of circumstances connecting the abbot himself with a foul transaction had been surveyed and resurveyed, measured and accurately described, so that Giovanni, in a low but terrible voice, one day displayed to the abbot so much of that body of facts which he possessed, that though he himself avowed his faith in the abbot's innocence, this ecclesiastical dignitary quivered before Giovanni's whisper, and begged like a slave for his gracious protection. With a sceptre of scandal, this solitary priest dominated, so far as he desired, the entire abbey. He was above all rules, superior to all traditions, the master of all customs, — his own law and guide.

He had the most sad and broken of asthmatic voices, and was the picture of quiescent truthfulness; yet when he desired any position in the abbey, another was displaced. At meals he read the passage of Scripture. He

chose this place, because while he read he could with a piercing glance look over upon Richard Beere, Lord Abbot of Glastonbury, as he was ordering monks about like so many slaves or making a visiting duke his puppet, and he could inform his lordship in absolute silence that he also had a master whom he must not offend.

Another throne of power belonged to Giovanni. He himself was chief, and indeed for a time sole flagellant for the abbey. Abbot Richard might go to Parliament with a gorgeous retinue, but he never knew when Fra Giovanni might demand the privilege of flogging him. Giovanni chuckled when he thought of how tenderly he would administer the long birchen rods to the back of this spiritual lord. With no faith whatever in the men, the motives, or the hopes of the Holy Church, he was a happy fixture at Glastonbury Abbey.

Erasmus tried to get the scholarly Giovanni to talk books, manuscripts, and Greek art. Everybody who could, or dared, was affecting interest in the Renaissance; but Fra Giovanni, who knew far more than did Erasmus of the delectable gossip attending the revival of learning in Italy, refused sullenly to speak except with irony.

"This is holy ground," said he. "The profane Greeks must not snuff this air. Nostrils like mine, so used to this sacred atmosphere, must not be polluted by odors from the Ægean. Weary-all Hill is higher than the Acropolis; and the Lord Abbot's kitchen is more to be desired than the Erectheon."

"Especially at meal-time," said Erasmus, who perceived the excellent raillery.

"Here," said Giovanni, as he affected not to notice the words of his interlocutor, — "here is this boy, whose pious mother has sent him here to be kept from the posthumous influence of a man named John Wycliffe, a reforming clerk of Lutterworth, who translated the Bible;

and, the saints will witness! my Lord Abbot has been allowing him to be with one who laughs at the proposition on which stands the doctrine of transubstantiation, 'Believe you eat, and you do eat.'"

"Did Vian tell you of our unhappy controversy?" asked More.

"Yes, indeed," answered Giovanni, with a smile; "and I doubt not his Wycliffite blood is tingling yet with his inborn opposition to the blessed doctrine of transubstantiation. He is a bright boy, — bright enough, Master Thomas More, to be the pride of all of this abbey and the hope of all of us who believe in 'the new learning.' The abbot will bless him, and we will educate him. But I must return to holier things than the education of a youth in profane learning. The saints forgive me!"

Even More perceived the point of his satire. The monk was very happy and gracious. They were now standing in front of this inscription: —

"HIC JACET ARTURUS, FLOS REGUM, GLORIA REGNI,
QUEM MORES PROBITAS COMMENDANT LAUDE PERENNI,
VERSUS HENRICI SWANSEY ABBATIS GLASTON.

. . . . . .

ARTURI JACET HIC CONJUX TUMULTA SECUNDA
QUÆ MERUIT CÆLOS VIRTUTEM PROIE SECUNDA."

Fra Giovanni advanced solemnly to the black mausoleum which he averred contained the bones.

"Bones are more sacred than brains," he remarked.

"These are bones of King Arthur of the Round Table," said More.

"Well," remarked his friend, "the king's bones were the bones of a more honorable man than are those I am accustomed to have to kneel before. For my part, I am worn out at the knees with crawling before the bones of saints who were not saintly."

Vian was amazed, and then he smiled at the idea. It

reminded him of what the heretics of Lutterworth used to say about saints' bones.

"They tell us that Guinevere's yellow hair was found nicely braided when the coffin of hollowed oak was opened," said Giovanni.

"The braiding of her locks was probably the last touch of the affectionate hands of Sir Lancelot," added More, with a smile.

"Have you no more disgusting relics than these?" asked the scholar. "I have been so accustomed to those that empty me of my dinner that I do not feel sufficiently impressed by these."

Even Giovanni smiled; and then he proceeded to lead the way through the long cloisters, beneath many of the arches which lie upon the ground to-day. At length they stood before the hair shirt of Gildas. More placed his hand upon it; and Erasmus said, —

"Is this the shirt which he never exchanged for a cleaner garment?"

"The same," said Giovanni. "It is very sacred."

"I notice it has the odor of sanctity. I believe now that this holy man never washed himself, and was unclean enough to be canonized. Is it not true?"

"Quite true," replied the monk. "Time is a base heretic, for this shirt does not smell so badly as it did once."

At that moment the abbot appeared. He noticed that Vian avoided him, and he interpreted it as follows: The boy had been caught again in the apartment of a certain young monk who had read to him the odes of Horace and many of the plays of Lucian. That young monk was now to be severely flogged by Giovanni; and Vian had found it out, and loving him whom he thought of as his literary benefactor, he had conceived a fear of the abbot.

The truth was, the boy knew nothing of the proposed

flogging; but he did feel within his heart a strange homesickness for Lutterworth, and a longing desire to accompany More and Erasmus, when they should bid farewell to the abbot and the hospitalities of Glastonbury Abbey. It was well that he did not dare to mention this, save to Fra Giovanni.

The next day Abbot Richard was busy with the Archbishop of York. While Giovanni was laughing with the monk whom he had been sent to flog, the illustrious travellers were slowly making their way out of the abbey, repeating the controversies of the past few days.

Vian — boy that he was — was broken-hearted at parting with two men so unlike monks in the freedom of their spirits, so manly in their thought. Giovanni had allowed him to follow him about from one place to another, until his tear-filled eyes were actually beholding the simulation of a flogging. Administered to whom? To the radiant-faced young monk who had read Horace to Vian. For what? For the sin of instructing Vian's ignorance, and acquainting his mind with one of the works of Roman genius.

As soon as the eyes of the youth saw the bare back of this friend of his soul, the birchen rods, and the pitiless gesticulations of Giovanni, they streamed with hot tears. He cried out in a manly voice: "I hate Lord Abbot Richard Beere! I hate you too, Fra Giovanni! I hate everything in this abbey."

Pretending anger, the monk excluded him at once, with words of censure and contempt. Vian was aflame with hate, indignation, and hope. Never did a boy's feet carry him with more speed than did his. Without a question from any who saw him running, he made his way to the great wall. Unconquered by a dozen failures to surmount it, his despair invented a ladder. At last he scaled it. While Giovanni, the mimic flagellant, was still laughing, as he and the younger and unflogged monk read

a play of Terence in that quiet cell which was supposed to be a place of private punishment; while also Abbot Richard was solemnly bewailing to the Archbishop the state of the Church, the spread of Greek thought, and especially the influence of Erasmus upon the clergy and laity, — this eager son of a Lollard was running unwearyingly, through heat and dust, in pursuit of the two travellers, who had been detained at the gate, and had just now gone out of his sight.

CHAPTER VII.

A FRENCH CHATEAU.

Men began to hunt more after words than matter, and more after the choiceness of the phrase, and the round and clean composition of the sentence, and the sweet falling of the clauses, and the varying and illustration of their works with tropes and figures, than after the weight of matter, worth of subject, soundness of argument, life of invention, or depth of judgment. Then grew the flowing and watery vein of Osorius, the Portugal Bishop, to be in price; then did Sturmius spend such infinite and curious pains upon Cicero the orator and Hermogenes the rhetorician, besides his own books of periods and imitation, and the like. Then did Car of Cambridge, and Ascham, with their lectures and writings almost deify Cicero and Demosthenes, and allure all young men that were studious into that delicate and polished kind of learning. Then did Erasmus take occasion to make the scoffing echo, *Decem annos consumpsi in legendo Cicerone;* and the echo answered in Greek: ΩΝΕ, *Asine.* — LORD BACON.

WHILE, next day, over that English roadway Vian was making his way back to Glastonbury Abbey, under the care of a friendly sub-prior who had been nearly a day in overtaking him, the following conversation was occurring in one of the most lovely of the castles of France: —

"Make him a knight and a scholar."

"That can easily be accomplished. He has the figure and spirit of Bayard himself, and he knows manuscripts now as no scholar of the Sorbonne ever knew them at such an age."

These remarks were made by two men, — rather, let

us acknowledge, by a youth, and a man past middle age, both of whom stood within the walls of the chateau of Amboise. This chateau in the early part of the sixteenth century crowned the summit of a huge rock overlooking the Loire, as it wound by the town of Tours, through the shady gardens and below the purple vineyards which constituted what was called "the Orchard of France."

These men had just come from Loches. Quietly and unobserved, they had made certain plans in that unfrequented spot, which was associated with the remorse of a queen; the splendid oratory which still stands as a memorial of the repentance which was never absent from the mind of Anne of Brittany, so long as she remembered the broken-hearted daughter of Louis XI., — Jeane of France, — from whom she had stolen a husband, Louis XII. The delay was over; a week of labor at paying special attention to Louis XII. had been endured; and they were glad to be back again at the residence of Louise of Savoy, where these plans could be carried out.

The first speaker was a youth of magnificent presence and lofty bearing; the second was a somewhat aged knight who had been wounded in battle. The latter was scarred, but impressive in his appearance, prematurely white-haired, limping as he walked, eloquent and learned in his every utterance, and evidently obedient in every courtesy toward the tall and stately youth who stood before him. The old man was known to the King Louis XII. and his court as Nouvisset. The younger was called François, Duc d'Angoulême, who was soon to be known to the world as Francis I., King of France.

Together they walked to the spot on which Cæsar is said to have stood when he was so struck with the unique value of the position in war that he ordered a tower crowned with a statue of Mars to be built thereon. They looked forth upon the Arcadian landscape. Neither,

however, was observant of its genial beauty. The young duke had his eye upon the figure of another youth, who was standing alone on the gentle slope, quite carelessly gazing upon the winding river. As the boy turned and walked briskly toward the gallery which overlooked the flowing stream, his face came in full view.

As he came nearer, his whole personality became more interesting. The unique qualities which uttered their silent history in his gait, his attitude, his fine nostril, and full forehead, commanded attention. He was but a boy, yet ages of human experience with various forces and of deepest significance burned in that glance. His clear eye was neither sharp nor stern, but its light was wonderfully penetrating, — after the manner of a voice which carries well because it is musical. Meditation upon some fancied wrong might have opened those solemn deeps which lay all discovered to one who would peer into its liquid infinities. It was not at all sentimental in its open hospitality; it was simply frank and full in the revelation which it made that the soul behind it felt the infinite significance of life, and knew not enough of the narrow policies of men, in the midst of its problems, even to hide his awful sense of life's mystery. His face had the free flowing lines which are found in the pictures of Raphael, but it was not wholly Italian. His careless yet noble attitude often reminded one, who had lived with portraits, of the earlier knights of France; yet more than France stood in the determined and graceful youth. Oftentimes his compressed lips would quiver; then the eyes would swim in what seemed tears; and then a single step would reveal a youth unconsciously jealous of his own prerogatives, perhaps impatient with himself that he ever felt an uncontrollable emotion within his breast.

"A knight and a scholar he shall be," said Nouvisset to the young Francis. "When do we leave your side?"

"Do not be greatly in haste," answered the duke, as he surveyed the youth with eyes of affection. "Nouvisset, behold my beloved, as he comes near to us! My heart breaks that we are to part, even for a little time. Where is my sister Marguerite? She has loved to hear his stories of Piedmont. I want him to feel sure of our affection. Do you think he sickens for his mountains?"

"No, my liege!" answered the lame knight. "He is to know surely that his whole family and kin were slaughtered. It must all be so melancholy that he shall never wish to return, or ask questions about it. Every resource of love and every power of the court, when you are our king, Sire! must be used to attach him to the France of the Church and the king. He loves you with a devotion pathetic and true. The Holy Church, if you will it, must surround him with all that may charm and fasten his affections to her. He loves knighthood with every drop of his blood. Mark you! there is Italian blood in your friend. Well, the charms of knighthood, its nobility and passion, must be brought to him. He will be your Bayard, mark me! Does not Madame d'Angoulême say he is made for a knight? By the soul of Gaston de Foix, as I die, I shall live again in that boy."

"And you believe that he is a scholar by nature, also?" asked the duke.

"By Saint Ives, I am sure he knows of books which I have not heard of. An astonishing household it must have been in which that child was cradled. Did he not even yesterday pick up my Demosthenes, fresh from Aldus himself, and printed in 1504, and tell me that one lay on the window-sill in his father's cottage? He knows by heart all the verses of Dante which condemn the Guelph and annoy the Pope. He already has heard somewhere so much of Petrarch and Boccaccio, that he smiled at what Madame d'Angoulême would think very sacred. A scholar? For your purposes, my beloved

Sire, as king of France by and by, you need a trusty knight, a learned friend, a skilful Churchman. Would to the saints that this stalwart child of the mountains were as sure to be a saint after the required pattern, as he is to be a heroic knight and the first bibliopole in Europe! You can keep your genius for war and the court, if your gentle and studious friend is put in charge of all affairs of learning."

By this time the mere boy concerning whom they had been conversing was out of sight. He was wandering about in a most playful mood with the tutor of the son of Madame d'Angoulême, which important lady we shall know as Louise of Savoy. Her daughter, whom French history knows first as Marguerite, then as Duchesse d'Alençon, and then as Queen of Navarre, was with them.

Pierre de Rohan, the instructor, had been asked by the anxious Louise to estimate this youth, with whom her son Francis, whom she already looked upon as sovereign of France by her lively governance, had fallen so deeply in love. She had heard the young Francis talk in the most surprising way about revivals of learning, scholars, poets, printers, and lectures on law and theology; and quite unable as was Louise of Savoy to appreciate the gigantic forces of the fading Renaissance and those of the dawning Reformation, with which any successor of Louis XII. would have to deal, she had perfect confidence in the good judgment of the famous tutor Pierre de Rohan, and in the sagacity and truthfulness of what Nouvisset had said, —

"Graciously permit me to say to you, as the widow of Charles d'Angoulême, cousin to the King Louis XII., that your husband knew that the successor of Louis must have a great and wise scholar at his court. Knighthood will ever after this have to do with ideas. The man of learning is now the true knight."

Louise of Savoy was sometimes a superb politician. This mother was, for the nonce, glad to hear her son talking with this remarkably strong and independent boy about things which kings and dukes had not cared for.

It was, however, laborious waiting for a king's death. Even the strange youth felt that the atmosphere about Amboise was very melancholy. The impatient Madame d'Angoulême, Louise of Savoy, was only a year older than Anne of Brittany, Queen of Louis XII.; but Anne had rapidly aged, as her sons by Charles VIII. or Louis XII. had died, one after the other; while, on the other hand, Louise of Savoy had grown young, apparently, with rejoicing, and in contemplating with infinite craft and pleasure the future of her handsome, strong, and ambitious son. Over against the piety and continuous repentance of Anne were the dissolute gayety and avaricious ambition of Louise. While, in tears, Queen Anne represented to her husband, Louis XII., the immoral conduct of the mother of Duke Francis, she knew also that Louise was anxiously hoping for the death of the king. He also remembered that in 1504, when all supposed him to be dying or dead, Anne's valuables which she had prematurely shipped for Brittany, were seized, and that afterward the audacious Louise found out that she was not yet Queen Regent of France. At first, when the king had been willing to give the Princess Claude to Duke Francis, her mother, Anne, had prevented her attachment to the son of the hated Louise.

Marriage had come, however; and death also had at last come, — but the latter had come only to Anne. Every one at Amboise wondered why the king did not die. Even the young stranger told Nouvisset, as the latter opened up before him the prospect of study at Chilly, that he would not care if Louis XII. should die.

"You are not ready to be the intellectual High Chamberlain to his Majesty, your loving Francis; neither is he ready to rule France," said the limping old soldier.

"I cannot think what you mean. We are both children: I know that full well. Madame d'Angoulême would not let him do wrong, if he were king. But I want to be true to him, if I may."

The simplicity of his words, his evident honesty and love, greatly touched Nouvisset; and when he told Francis and his mother, they wept, and the haughty Louise was quite tender for an entire afternoon.

"Cruel war has its blessings," she remarked. "Who could have framed a prettier speech? It was a bright omen for us, when the bright-eyed companion came to him who shall soon be king of France!" and she stood by the side of her tall, excellently proportioned son, touched his rich hair with her hand of planning affection, and then kissed him.

The Duc d'Angoulême felt in that mother's kiss the stiffness of a sceptre which she would certainly wield. The crown of France really seemed to have been lifted from his forehead the instant her slender and crafty hand touched his hair; and Francis was haughty and gloomy.

Every one at court who understood the feelings of Francis for the strange youth, was worried because the latter did not seem happy with the games at Amboise.

"He must be amused; and if he wants the companionship of an army of scholars, let them be gathered together."

The mother was speaking to Francis, her son, who was deeply troubled at the sadness of his companion.

"He must never feel himself a prisoner. He is accustomed to the mountains and great landscapes; let him have the wines, and let some one teach him all the games of chance at Amboise," added she, determined

to conquer the sorrow which was eating up the life of the boy.

"Ah!" said Nouvisset, "not all the wines of France or the gambling of the capital will charm that youth from his recollections of the books at his father's cottage. Strange he does not long for him! He seems to have bidden a decisive farewell to his father and sister, believing them to have been slain. But he has been bred a student. His brain is full of that quenchless ambition to know, which characterizes the finest sort of mind. He is a child of learning; and I believe him to be the hope of your son's court. I ought to depart this day with him for Chilly, where he may be educated. Pray do not keep him, gracious Madame! even for your son's present enjoyment, where we only wait for Louis XII. to die."

Francis and Ami — for it was Ami Perrin whose fine face and bright eye had made way for admiration of the higher qualities and more important possibilities of his nature at the chateau of Amboise — had been exploring the contents of the bookcase, which, with its wired front and Florentine silk linings, stood prettily near the window in the gallery. Their companionship was sweet and profoundly affectionate.

The secret Francis could keep, and Ami's innocent faith pleased him. Ami knew himself to have been brought from a bloody Waldensian home. In the fight between the soldiers and the mountaineers, he remembered to have seen the hacked wrists of his father, whom he now believed to be in a grave with little Alke. He was not forgetful of that stunning blow upon his own head, from the effects of which he did not rally until he found himself in the hands of a French captain, who had nursed him to consciousness with untiring diligence. When about to die of a wound which Ami knew the soldier received from Gaspar Perrin himself, he had lov-

ingly given the convalescent Ami into the charge of the young duke Francis. From the hour of his acquaintance with this royal youth, Ami had been loved with passionate tenderness.

An astrologer whom Francis had consulted had made it clear to this haughty Duc d'Angoulême that in this youth, Ami, lay fortune and destiny. Ami had been taken to Paris. The brilliancy of the court, the luxurious beauty of the palaces, the interest of the games, the unimagined delights of the duke's promises, the opening hopes of knighthood, of which his mother had told him in his childhood; the unique position which, by his training, he occupied in a court already aglow with the lights of the Renaissance, — all these made life seem picturesque enough, and kept his spirit from perishing amidst sorrowful recollections.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE KING UNDER GOVERNANCE.

> The twists and cracks in our poor earthenware,
> That touch me to more conscious fellowship
> (I am not myself the finest Parian)
> With my coevals.
>
> GEORGE ELIOT.

VERY soon Francis himself found the throne upon which this friendship had seated itself.

At the death of Anne, the queen, the King of France desired a truce with England, such as he had signed with Ferdinand, Maximilian, and the Pope. Princess Mary, sister of young Henry VIII., was made a pledge of peace, in spite of the disguised opposition of the mother and guide of the talented Duc d'Angoulême. As the young queen, after the marriage, appeared in her regal loveliness by the side of the trembling Louis XII., the reckless and engaging Francis was discovered to be deeply interested in her beauty. In crises such as this, only one man had hitherto been able to control him. Oh for Nouvisset now, to keep the warm heart of the already dissolute Duke Francis from burning with an ardor which could not be controlled in the presence of the fair English princess! In this instance even Nouvisset had failed, but the young Ami was omnipotent.

Louise of Savoy became the guardian of Mary. Francis was persuaded to divide his time between Ami, who had wooed him back to honor, and the pursuit of a wiser course than that which would permit of an intrigue with the young queen.

In all those efforts to prevent the imprudence which Francis had resolved upon, the cautious Louise and Nouvisset, whom she trusted, were unwillingly learning to respect the talents and admire the courageous affection of the young mountaineer. His conscience emboldened his love. Where no knight would dare to tread, where no king would think of interfering, even into the very heart of the imperious Francis, this youth had entered; and there he had conquered by the power of a lofty friendship. At the castle, or ten miles away, from the little room in which he soon found himself at Chilly, he was soon ruling the future king.

"I could not think of his being untrue to the faithful Claude," said he to Nouvisset, when the soldier bade him know what an unaccountable influence he exercised upon the fiery soul of Francis.

Louise of Savoy was angry, and then was persuaded to be wise.

"Even the love which my son has for me would not have availed to avert his impetuous course if it had not been reinforced by that boy," said Louise of Savoy, half spitefully, jealous in the recognition of the fact that the sovereign power which she proposed to exercise on the will of her son in coming years must often be wielded by the aid of another.

She could have been more patient if the boy had not failed at her court, the real cause of which failure annoyed her constantly. It cannot be said that Ami had won either distinction or self-respect, as the chosen page of the arrogant Louise. He had received no training as a page; besides, Francis was a headstrong youth, who

interfered with his mother's commands and had his own way, which was often very consumptive of the time which Ami would otherwise have given to her in the form of obedient attentions.

Nouvisset had often indicated to both mother and son that if this promising lad were ever to become a knight and a scholar, he must have him for some time where he could give him proper training. The youth was affectionately bound to Francis, and yet was ambitious for knighthood and learning.

At last the golden six months of undisturbed culture which Ami had been promised with Nouvisset, came. Louis XII. would not die; Francis and Marguerite kissed Ami farewell; Louise of Savoy gave him a book on Falconry and her blessings, the worth of which latter Ami did not overestimate; and the lame knight set out with the young student for Chilly, which was a village four leagues from the capital, and one with whose peasant population Nouvisset was perfectly acquainted.

There was never a more lonely youth in France than Francis, Duc d'Angoulême, who, since his marriage to Princess Claude, was also Duc de Valois. He was besieged on every side by efforts to cause him to forget his young protégé; but for many days he lived stubbornly in his castle of solitude. He was sufficiently courteous to be a pleasant companion; affectionate enough to his darling sister Marguerite; sufficiently full of the policies and ambitions which his mother shared, to study matters of state; religious enough in a duke's manner, and in the manner of the time, to give hope to the clergy of France; and fully as fond of literature and art as seemed well in the eyes of a mother who did not much enjoy the grammars and manuscripts of which the nobly made youth was so studious. Beneath it all there glowed the passionate friendship of Francis for Ami; and above all these was a conviction that with Ami's future were bound

up the best destinies of the kingdom, for which he hoped. The astrologer had made that perfectly plain.

Even Marguerite, at that hour dear beyond expression to the proud Francis, lisped her protest; turning up her pretty face, and assuming the affectionate authority which her two years of seniority gave her, when she said, —

"Oh, it pains me, brother and lover that you are to me, that not I, but a boy stolen from the mountains, should have your soul in his keeping."

"Marguerite of Marguerites," said he, in that voice of pathetic tenderness with which he had learned to pronounce the words, "do not say that to me. I love you beyond all else; yet Ami must be loved also."

Thus early in their friendship began the strong influence of the orphaned and untitled Waldensian upon a mind fitted in many respects to be the greatest ruler in Europe; fitted by so many weaknesses, if we may so speak, to bring upon himself and his country so much humiliation and shame.

The jealousy of Louise of Savoy and her daughter Marguerite was, however, more than matched by the jealousy of this youth, whose chief weakness of character was this same tormenting passion. Louise of Savoy thought she had never seen jealousy until she became better acquainted with Ami at a later day. Nouvisset had remarked to the watchful Louise and the affectionate Marguerite, that his study of humanity had never procured for him such an interesting problem as was this engaging boy.

"Surely these elaborate attentions paid to him by the court have grown within him a deadly viper," said the offended Marguerite.

"With the fortune of a waif and the political prospects of a foundling, he is as jealous and proud of his influence with Francis, who will be soon my king, as though he were the son of the proudest knight or the director of

the duke's fortunes, appointed by the saints themselves," averred Nouvisset to a bosom friend.

The lame knight did not then rightly judge of the boy's political prospects. Never did a boy have such a future in France. However, Nouvisset had not overestimated that inborn disposition to jealousy which had already manifested itself in various ways. The whole fabric of Ami's spirit was shaken when he saw another ruling a realm which he loved, or which once he had influenced. When he grew homesick for the mountains, his very jealousy at the prospect of losing his self-control bade the tears dry suddenly in his eyes; when he found himself the prey of annoying doubts as to the actual death of his father and sister at the hands of the French soldiery, his resolve to put the past behind him, made with the fervency of young blood, stiffened itself with the jealous apprehension that he was not the monarch of his own soul, and doubt was banished. Nothing save this jealous regard for his individual will kept him often from breaking down completely. Nothing save the jealous perception that somebody else was likely to exercise sovereignty over the mind of his royal friend Francis, could have disturbed the ardor of his desire to study with Nouvisset at Chilly. His instructor saw that this was the concealed fire, likely at any moment to break forth and consume any wise plans and noble ideas which might be his. Gifted, supremely gifted, with energies which indicated greatness itself, the very qualities which made him promising were already unsteady in the presence of this inbred passion.

The friendship, nay, the devotion of Francis unto Ami was such that he really delighted in this unholy spirit. He was also foolish enough to feed its flame. He had gloried in its fury. He loved to be loved, as he thought, with an affectionateness so intolerant. Against the growth of such an evil power, Nouvisset, on the other

hand, was sure to place all wise opposition. He knew Ami's nature so thoroughly that nothing but the fact of heredity could explain this most absurd flame so often lighting up his soul, until all its secret recesses were revealed. He henceforth at Chilly, as he told Marguerite, would keep the fuel away from the fire, and seek to destroy it entirely.

What made it still more difficult to be dealt with was the grandeur it often assumed in its association with a stalwart and assertive conscientiousness, — a conscientiousness which had been bred into the youth by generations of ardent Waldensians. Nouvisset, tired as he was of the falsity of the French court, and entirely conscious of the utter powerlessness of the influence of the Church to control human life, greatly admired such a conscience, standing in such solemn contrast as it did with the cant, sentimentalism, and iniquity about him. He saw that Ami always touched Francis with a moral power, healthful and refreshing. The youth was jealous, as it often seemed, because of the fact that he was right and others who flitted about the young king presumptive were wrong.

One day Nouvisset ventured to say to Marguerite: "I could not think of attempting to diminish Ami's power over our Duc de Valois so long as Francis has any love for the good and true. It would seem as though I had not a care for good morals. Something must be had here in France to keep things from going to utter destruction;" and then the conversation drifted into statements and wonderings about the influence of the Reformers.

From that moment Marguerite herself, who had great confidence in the judgment and honor of Nouvisset, was noticed to be more tolerant toward those who insisted upon the necessity for reform within the Holy Catholic Church.

At that juncture also did Nouvisset, of whom we know too little, disclose some new and many old characteristics with which the friends of Francis, Duc de Valois, would become very familiar. He was just such a man as at that hour in the history of France often found his way into the army of priests which thronged the cathedrals and mônasteries, the army of soldiers which gathered about a king, or the army of those who were either affecting or realizing the scholarly ideals. The name Nouvisset would denote a Frenchman; but this man was a Greek, who had changed his name, for reasons which were satisfactory to him and to his sovereign.

Louis XII. was the first monarch to allow the *stradiots* a place in the French army. These mercenaries had hawked their services about Europe, offering them for sale to the highest bidder. The Turk was poor and proud; the Christian was needy, but also rich; and the papal legate at the side of the French king rejoiced as their vizorless helmets charmed the sunbeams, and the huge cross-handed swords which they carried pledged a new power against the infidels. Amongst them all, none had presented so fine an appearance as had the mercenary whom we shall know as Nouvisset. He was formed for knighthood. The cuirass with gracefully flowing sleeves, and with the gauntlets in mail, was half concealed and half revealed by a sort of jacket, which fitted with no disadvantage a form of dignity and grace, in whose presence the classical devices which had been worked with such care and freedom on his sword, the less beautiful small-arms carried at the saddle-bow, and the long lance appeared to connect the new and barbaric West with the ancient and cultured East.

Nouvisset, long years before, had felt the raptures and pains of love by the blue Ægean. He had read from Theocritus to his Grecian damsel in vain. He had told her how Aspasia must have loved Pericles, without

eliciting a hint of the energetic response he craved. On the unfortunate issue of this affection he had recklessly attached himself to a conscienceless band of hirelings, and being almost companionless — for he was a scholar, and of most gentle breeding — he found himself at last a servant of Louis XII. of France, at wages which galled his fine soul.

Chance, however, very soon brought him to the notice of two men with whose careers French history has had much to do. He had previously won the praise and friendly association of Chevalier Bayard, *sans peur et sans reproche;* but on the battle-field of Ravenna he had completely captured his heart. There, in those same woods of pine, where Dante passed days and nights in repeating the growing verses of the "Divine Comedy," where Boccaccio had dreamed of Honoria, where the English Dryden would one day reinspire his genius, and Lord Byron would make into song his experiences of travel and of love, — the heroic spirit of the Greek, who never forgot the fact of his extraction from the loins of a soldier of Marathon, displayed its excellent quality. Often as the fearless Chevalier told the story of Nouvisset's courage and sympathy to the good heart of Louis XII., he would forget the blood-tracked marsh, spreading far to the white Alps and the blue Apennines, the gory fen which rivalled the red afterglow glaring upon the summits, the golden lilies and pink tamarisks which were trodden down by the corseleted soldiers, the orchises whose purple splendor hung above the faces of the dying, the gleaming marigolds which made a flaming pillow for the dead, all the ardent valor which marched through the shallow canal in the very face of blazing Spanish artillery, even the awful suddenness of silence which came to the blaring trumpets and piercing clarions when the agonizing shout went up, "Gaston is dead!" — all these were forgotten as Bayard sought

to utter his feelings of admiring love for Nouvisset's incredible effort to save him.

The very soul of knighthood looked through the eyes of the Greek mercenary. "Sire, I thought I could see the ghost of his ancestor at his side fighting at the Milvian Bridge," said the Chevalier Bayard, as he told the story of Nouvisset at Ravenna.

In a controversy concerning the "Oration on the Crown," which rose between two men of the court where Nouvisset was doing duty, something had been said as to the patriotism of Demosthenes. French wit, spitefully refusing the Renaissance, dared to impugn the motives of the great Greek orator. A poor and unlearned Greek stood by, silently wishing that his position and learning might justify his defending the eloquence of his native land. Ignorance seemed sure to triumph, whe this stalwart hireling Nouvisset, unable to endure the attack longer, painted such a picture of the times, and so justly rendered the burning words of the eloquent foe of Philip, that the poet who at that moment influenced the intellectual atmosphere of France most strongly with his own eagerness for scholarly attainment, leaped toward him and embracing him, cried out: "'T is well. I never saw you before. I am the master of these," pointing to the gathered crowd of courtiers. "You are mine!"

It was the poet Clement Marot, who was to teach Marguerite d'Angoulême love and rhyming, and to be compelled at a later day to withdraw himself from France, under the complimentary charge of heresy.

These two events in the life of Nouvisset had given him a unique place at court.

Nouvisset, who had mastered knighthood and his precious books, was now feeling the burden of advancing years. The wound received at Ravenna, as he sought to save the illustrious Gaston de Foix, had incapacitated

him for any active service, and commended him to the deepest affections of the king.

He had seen many changes in France, but none which interested his hope more deeply than the consequences which had followed the setting up of a printing-press in the Sorbonne by Louis XII. in 1469, and the refusal of that monarch to persecute what in England was known as "the new learning," — none, except, perhaps, the obvious growth of the feeling that unhappy France, through the Church which overawed the intellectual and spiritual life of Christendom, was becoming barren of any perception of the radical difference between right and wrong, and that she was dimly searching after some higher moral motive power. Of course, he looked upon all moral and mental phenomena from the point of view of the Greek. He had never been won over to the churchmanship of Louise of Savoy, who had often, amidst her shameless crimes, explained to him the transparent theory and delightful practice of the "indulgences." From the ignorance of the clergy he fled to his Attic treasures, to be refreshed and fed; and from the iniquity and religiosity of the devotees in Church and State he hied himself to Plato and Socrates, and there he was reinspired. They, at least, were less superstitious and more serious. The Greek concluded each day, with the words of the heathen moralist: "Be of good cheer about death, and know this of a truth, — that no evil can happen to a good man, either in life or after death."

How could he be true to the ambitious designs of Louise of Savoy with respect to Ami's faith and Ami's influence upon her son Francis, and still faithful to these his own soul's best convictions? He seemed to foresee it all. He made a resolve. Ami would certainly be charmed into the deepest devotion unto the Holy Catholic Church. That event no single teacher could prevent. Omnipotence only could oppose successfully the multitu-

dinous schemes which would surely bind him to her altars. But Nouvisset knew that that Waldensian spirit which Ami breathed would by and by assert its inwrought protest. Meanwhile he would quietly sow those seeds of philosophy in Ami's mind which would spring to life at some distant day, when the drops of heroic blood, which must soon flow, began to touch them. He would sow the seed, and bide his time.

CHAPTER IX.

WITCHES AND KNIGHTS.

"Cuer resolu d'aultre chose nà cure
Que de l'honneur,
Le corps vaincu le cueur reste vaincqueur,
Le travail est l'estuve de son heur."

ONE night, in the home of the peasant which Nouvisset had selected as the place in which he would instruct and train the chosen friend of the coming king, Ami had quietly calculated that just five years had gone, since he, a struggling and terrified child, beheld the descent of the French invaders from the monastery on the hill; the scenes of carnage in that humble cottage which was burned; the staggering form of his dying father holding out his hacked wrists, as he piteously cried, "You have killed my little Alke; I am stricken to death; spare my child Ami, oh, spare him!"

The mind of the young man which the patient Greek had thus far so carefully educated, had long been poised between two thoughts. One was, "I love the memory of my father and little Alke." The other was, "I love those who have obeyed the dying man's pleading cry, and have opened my soul to such a vast future." The glamour of his recent associations; the fact that he knew himself to be influential with Prince Francis d'Angoulême; the recollections of his mother's ambition that he should

be a knight, and the probability of its attainment; the memory of his father's hope that he should be a scholar, and the probability of its realization also, — all were in league with a certain powerful tendency toward court-life which he had inherited from his Italian mother, who, as we have seen, was a daughter of Count Neforzo of Venice. Whatever might happen in later days, when the wild romanticism of youth had been shot through with the steady light of conscience, this devotion to Francis was now sure to furnish the aim and temper of his young manhood.

Nouvisset had been commanded to do but one thing. "Prepare him to be the companion and friend of my loving son," said Louise of Savoy, as she gave up her page, and placed many bright coins in the hands of the lame knight.

It was a many-sided culture which Nouvisset was able to give to Ami and his young friend at Chilly. Oftentimes to the Greek it appeared that his charge had been removed from the superstitions which haunt a court, to those, less magnificent but more intense, which beset a peasant's home.

While at the castle Francis was explaining to his mother the efforts of the astrologer who made it clear that Ami was to be his good dæmon, yonder at the house in Chilly the following colloquy was going on: —

"A witch with a red hood and golden toes must have been beautiful," said Francesco de Robo, a young Italian who had been allowed to be a companion of Ami at Chilly by Admiral Andrea Doria, an ally of France, who desired his promising protégé, Francesco, to be educated also.

To him and to Ami the peasant's loquacious wife had been relating her experience with witches.

"Yes, all but her ugly face," slowly answered she, as she left the large room in which the husband and she

lived, and in the evening shared with Nouvisset and the two youths. The door squeaked with a ghostly sound, as she jerked and shut it.

They were silent for some minutes; for even then witchcraft had no delight to imaginative young men, as the evening darkness came on. Nouvisset and the peasant had not yet returned from the hunt for hares on which they had set out many hours before. The evening tasks had fallen to the peasant's wife. She had herself gone out to the first of the three buildings which constituted the dwelling of a villein. It was called the cow-house. The "ugly face" which she had just mentioned seemed to appear and reappear in the crackling fire, which had been made of vine branches and fagots, and which furnished a flame that surged up a wide chimney. There were also very strange noises on the thatched roof.

"There, I see her face just above the iron-pot hanger!" whispered Francesco, frightened almost to silence.

Ami, with the cool rationalism which had made his father a heretic with respect to so many other phantoms, leaped to the side of the chimney, seized the heavy shovel, and smote vigorously the tripod and caldron and meat-hook in turns, half destroying both his weapon and the good housekeeper's utensils.

"I will damage her golden toes," said the fearless Waldensian.

"And the very Devil will drag us both into hell, if you don't stop!" cried Francesco, with a shudder. "Stop, I beg you! Do not fight against a witch."

Even Ami wished the peasant's wife had not left them alone; for he certainly saw a face just then in a curling flame, and he heard a sound from above him which made him tremble. He felt cold, and yet he did not go near the fire. He walked over to the table, instead, on which stood a kneading-trough and a bit of cheese.

There had been two pieces of cheese on that same table but a few minutes before.

"Francesco, did you eat the other bit of cheese?"

"No; nor did she, for she likes it not," replied the Italian, with interesting precipitation.

"What became of it, then?"

"I cannot tell. Ami, I wish I was back in a strong castle, where I could bar the door and call the soldiers. That witch with the ugly face has taken the cheese."

"It would do no good, if we could bar a door of steel. Witches like to come through impossible barriers, don't they? Do they eat cheese, Francesco?"

"Yes, I suppose so; but I never saw a witch where there was not some sickly woman about. Why did Nouvisset bring us here? Oh, witches! They don't infest the ships of Admiral Andrea Doria. The peasant's wife never sees a witch when the peasant himself and Nouvisset are here."

"But the duke — even Francis d'Angoulême has seen them. I waited with him for a whole night, to see one who had come to his mother. She looked fierce enough, with a hook on her ear, and she had a head of fire. The Duke Francis wanted her to come — I mean he wanted the witch to come. He was sure she would return, and tell him of the death of the king."

Ami was fast losing his rationalistic temper, as the little gimlet, which lay near the elbow of Francesco, was pushed off the table and fell upon the hand-mill in which the peasant's wife was about to grind the corn which she had now gone to fetch. The shock seemed to fill the huge fireplace with ugly faces. Ami prepared himself to fence. Knighthood, however, never seemed so futile and unimpressive.

Francesco pushed himself backward among the baskets, which behaved under his feet as if they were alive; and suddenly feeling a twinge of pain, he cried out, —

"This is an infernal place! Ami, a witch has pinched me, or pricked me with her needle. I know what I feel in my own flesh. Don't strike at another witch!" he added, as he saw the knightly Ami approach, brandishing a small jug, instead of a sword, in his sinewy hand.

"Come away from that dark corner!" commanded Ami, still belligerent.

Francesco started to obey, and cried out again, "She has pinched me!"

"Jump out of the way of her!" said Ami.

"Oh, my arm is held fast by the hideous teeth of a veritable witch!" yelled Francesco.

Ami knew that his friend was in great pain; but he was afraid to strike or to seek to relieve him. Nouvisset had never told him what a knight should do under such circumstances. Ami called lustily for the peasant's wife, who from the cow-house informed him that she was performing what seems to the reader a very modern thing, — setting a trap for mice and using a bit of cheese for bait.

"There! that cheese is in the trap; there are no witches here," said he.

In an angry voice Francesco replied: "Am I a knave or a fool, that you disbelieve me? My aching arm is yet held fast by her fierce tooth. You need not help me, but you must not doubt me."

Boldly — for his knightly honor had suffered — did the Waldensian now take hold of the suffering Francesco. The Italian was leaning forward as he had been since he felt the pain, both hands grasping the table as though, if he lost his hold upon that fact of this world, he would fall into purgatory. His forehead was studded with cold sweat-drops, when Ami found a small line which seemed to bind his friend fast to the skin blouse whose leathern belt dangled, as Francesco swayed backward and forward,

and pulled it far out from the hook on which the peasant had hung it.

"This — is — a — fish-line!" said the breathless Ami, with mingled terror and disgust.

"Am I a fool or a knave?" thundered Francesco, with his voice full of agony.

"Well, neither," replied his friend, with the speed of gradual discovery; "but you have one of the peasant's fish-hooks in your arm, as sure as you are alive."

"The witch put it there; she did!" said the Italian, more disgusted still, because he had been so victimized. "The miserable witch did it. Do you hear her now scampering off on the roof?"

The friends sat down by the huge fireplace. Ami needed not the knife, which he had just drawn from the sheath which had been hanging from the belt of the peasant's coat. He did need a great deal of forced solemnity, however, as he listened to Francesco, who possessed not a grain of humor, who never doubted the existence of variously organized supernatural beings, least of all, that of witches, and who had begun to tell Ami about the witches of Italy when Nouvisset and the peasant returned from the hunt.

"You are both as pale as ghosts," said the Greek, as they rose to greet him and to relieve the weary arms of the lame knight of the burden of two fat hares.

"Well, we have seen strange things," said Francesco.

"And felt some of them too," added Ami.

"Did you see the wild-cats chasing over the roof?" said Nouvisset.

"No!" answered both, believing for the instant that truth is stranger than fiction.

"Did you hear the unchivalrous peasant laugh and poke his rough fun at his wife, caught out there in his mouse-trap as she was, and too much annoyed at being caught to ask a young knight to extricate her fingers?"

Nouvisset could not but laugh, as he related the tale of her woes. "She has been entrapped this long while. The rats will flee the premises, if they hear the peasant laugh and hear her scold him. She blamed the trap and the cheese; and she blamed the young knights, who, she says, made a great howl in the house here, and then called out at her. She is full of wrath."

Even Francesco smiled at this, and desired to give the conversation a new turn.

"There are too many men present here now, for any witch to come to this house to-night," said Ami, quietly.

Francesco gave his companion to understand that any further information concerning the fright, granted to Nouvisset or to the household, would offend his dignity; and while Ami was silent, but pained at having to remain so, the lame Greek explained to them, as he had often done, the advantages he had sought to offer them at Chilly. He told them again of Socrates and his disciples, how impossible it was to do anything at any court for them, and of the desire of their best friends that they should know the country as they knew their books. He concluded by remarking: "Wisdom does not live in castles; the chivalry of ideas avoids the capitals."

While the discipline of Nouvisset was vigorous and unyielding, both Ami and Francesco indulged themselves often in good-humored raillery as to their conduct as young aspirants for knighthood, and as students who took on trust their changed circumstances.

Here, at Chilly, was no Louise of Savoy, whose wines Ami was to pour out, whose cooked hares he might carve, whose letters he might write and carry to Duprat or the Duc de Bourbon; but so eagerly did he seize the great idea of respect for womankind which inspired chivalry, that the neophyte having astonished Nouvisset

by his choice of a rather loquacious egg-seller in Chilly, as his lady whom he would serve, lavished upon this quaintest of peasantwomen a thoroughly chivalrous devotion, as he recounted to her his imagined deeds of valor. Nouvisset was not altogether unwilling to see this, inasmuch as he had often said to them: "The peasantwoman of unhappy France needs a knightly protector. True knighthood seeks the weakest, not the strongest, that it may be truly chivalric."

With no little amazement did Francesco, who was proud of his Italian relationship, behold his friend Ami on one Good Friday, carrying for the woman, to the priests, a basket of eggs which had been duly boiled in a madder bath, which now only needed the blessing to fit them for the already strained appetites which had waited to enjoy them on Easter Sunday.

Practising at wielding the sword, they grew strong in muscular development, and soon the lances were brandished with graceful ease. Combats were arranged and duels fought, while Nouvisset sat robed in august dignity. The peasant and his wife were amused; and the talkative egg-seller, pausing with her stick, from whose extremities dangled two filled baskets, laughed heartily, and always urged Ami to some braver task.

"You will be made an esquire, surely; you are a fit one for a queen," she cried out.

Before the door of the peasant's home, Nouvisset had set up the revolving image of a knight; and often through the morning many of the Parisian chivalry who had been invited by Francis himself to pass a day at Chilly, observed the youths playing at the game of quintain. Ami was ever the favorite in the saddle. His good temper, his unfailing wisdom, communicated themselves to the steed; and until jealousy of another's influence over the good-will of the Duke Francis appeared, he managed shield, lance, and charger with complete

dexterity. Gauntlet, sword, and cuirass always came into awkward and ungainly positions, — his very vision of the desired accolade faded from view, — when this abominable passion was roused.

It had been the effort of Nouvisset to quench it, if possible; and therefore Prince Francis had not often visited Chilly. Francesco was sure to be more successful in any sort of tournament on those occasions, and the result of a month's labor with Ami was destroyed.

As the days came and went, obvious progress was made. The youths praised the already celebrated white bread of Chilly. Anything was preferable, in Ami's experience, to eating luxuries with Louise of Savoy. Ami praised the oil which grew rancid before Lent was passed, though Francesco suggested obtaining a dispensation from the Pope which would enable them to eat butter.

Ami even rationalistically reflected upon the situation, when the egg-seller trudged along through Lent, unable to get a living, —

"Now the theologians teach that the hen is a water animal. The hymn in the service implies that fish and fowl were made at the same time. You ought to sell us eggs with the fish."

She answered him by saying: "There is much vile heresy in the world. Do you think I would lose my soul, you varlet?"

It was difficult often for the Waldensian to overcome his inbred heretical disposition on fast days. The peasant was an artist at fattening a *poularde*. Ami had been instructed to believe that Louis XII. had agreed with the Duke Francis that they should lack nothing at Chilly to make them comfortable. Lent was a fearful trial. As Ami looked upon the flock of geese which the pious peasant drove to the field to feed every day, his sinewy youth remembered the current saying: "Who eats the

king's goose returns his feathers in a hundred years." He became desperately weary of the whole Catholic regimen; and Nouvisset was not concerned that the orthodoxy of the time grew distasteful to him.

"Make him a knight and a scholar!" — this demand of Louise of Savoy was given a barely literal interpretation. "Some one else," said he, "must furnish his theological culture. I hope it will be Berquin, Lefevre, or Farel." The thought that the already suspected Lefevre or the young William Farel, especially that Louis de Berquin, should get hold of this youth, was itself a promise that the Church would not quench the better lights of his mind and moral sense.

After many months of training, the day at length came nigh for that religious ceremony which was to mark a changed social condition. Francesco and Ami were to see their arms hallowed. Their knightly calling was to be made sacred. Cased in armor of the most brilliant sort, the gifts of the duke and Andrea Doria to their protégés, they had mounted the two excellent chargers which were to carry them to the Cathedral of Notre Dame.

"It is too heavy; I 'll fall and kill them all, — all my hens, Holy Mother!"

"Go on, heretic! go on! Get up, sinner! go, and do penance afterward!"

The noisy voices of the priest of Chilly and the egg-seller mingled their discordant tones.

"I did not eat eggs myself," cried the egg-seller.

"I did see the shells of eggs at your own door. Will you — dare you lie to a priest?" yelled the ecclesiastic, who lifted his heavy cane above her.

"I cooked the eggs for the young knight. He told me that hens and fish came on one day, just alike. The teachers said so."

Ami saw it all in an instant. The faithful old egg-

seller had believed the faithless youth. She was sure that he could not lie to her. Loving him, as she did, pitying the hunger of so beautiful a youth, she had dared to prepare him some eggs, — that was her sin. Of course the shells proved the indictment. She had been eating eggs in Lent! She must be punished. Here she came. All her sinful hens which had ventured to lay eggs in Lenten season were tied together by the same great flaxen cord; and they were cackling their protest against being thus wrapped about her neck, like a living rope of flesh and feathers which also covered her shoulders and fell upon the ground. The priest came after her, making her suffer this public punishment, in addition to the labor which the task involved, to which she was evidently unequal.

As the condemned woman came near, Ami recognized her. He leaped from his horse. There was a sudden stopping of the flash of steel, as it flamed through the air; then a howling priest tumbled into a ravine near the roadway; and Ami, with knightly grace, cut the cord with his sword.

"Oh, my hens! Catch my hens, my Lord, my Knight!" cried the liberated egg-vender, as her poultry ran away with a rapidity suggestive of the unpleasant bondage from which they had been freed.

"Mount your charger!" commanded the lame knight.

Ami obeyed; and as they silently rode toward Paris, even Francesco laughed when Ami plucked an ordinary chicken-feather from his spur, and said, to the great amusement of Nouvisset, —

"This feather would make a fine plume for a knight. Knighthood seeks the weakest, not the strongest."

As they journeyed along, Nouvisset rehearsed to them the meaning and value of the various exercises he had given them. He did not belie his pride in these his companions, as he spoke of the fact that they had not

been compelled to serve a seignorial household, and that this private school of chivalry was not inferior. They were quite able to dictate etiquette in any master's court. Their manners he knew to be as refined as their bodies were agile and strong. Energetic, bold, versatile, they were also scholarly and pure. Everything, save Ami's one desperate passion, had been conquered as easily as the lame knight broke a charger. Faithful were they to duty, as sentries or gentlemen. The eye of Ami was especially quick, and its vision comprehensive. No master on a field of conflict need ever wait too long for his valiant assistance. True, they had not stopped in the intermediate rank. Neither had either of them been pursuivant-at-arms. But distinguished knights had practised before them; they had attended loftily descended ladies, who had visited Chilly, and they had visited other lands in books.

Even now they expected to be honored in the ceremony by Bayard himself, and to visit other countries with the king or with Admiral Andrea Doria. Scarfs embroidered by Marguerite, perfumes from Genoa and Naples, spotless garments selected by Louise of Savoy, awaited them. They grew impatient as they talked together.

Three nights constituted their prayerful vigil in the chapel of the king, who graciously received them with the Prince Francis. Masses were at length said for them, as on bended knees they worshipped, each having his sword fastened to his neck preparatory to the moment when it should be girded to his side. At a dramatic instant Louise of Savoy, whom he hated, approached Ami, who however honored every woman; and the duke's mother handed him his helmet and spurs.

She repeated the words: "These two spurs of gold are to compel your horse onward. Emulate his eagerness,

and imitate his docility. Obey the Lord, as the charger obeys you."

At the conclusion of the words Chevalier Bayard, *sans peur et sans reproche*, clad in gorgeous armor, smote him with the sword. The accolade was soon in his hands. Lance and shield were presented; and Ami Perrin walked forth to mount his charger — a knight.

CHAPTER X.

A YOUNG SCHOLAR AND A YOUNG KING.

"Nutrisco et Extinguo."

JANUARY 1st had come. The device of the salamander in the fire, and the baleful motto printed at the head of this chapter had taken their places in the armorial annals of France.

"Frenchmen, we declare unto you the most fatal news you ever heard. The good King Louis, the father of his people, is dead! Pray to God for the repose of his soul!" Thus cried the watchmen of Paris.

"My son is king! What a recompense for all the trials and adversities of my youth!" Thus exclaimed, with transports of joy, Louise of Savoy.

Ami was now with Nouvisset and Francesco at the capital. He heard both remarks.

"This is a strange land," said he, with deliberate thoughtfulness; and checking himself, he added, "But I love my king and friend."

"I also loved his Majesty Louis XII.," solemnly replied his instructor.

"*That* no one can doubt!" and Ami asked in a breath, "Should love for the dead keep back devotion to the living?" Then he said with pathos, "I had a

father whom I loved; and he taught me to love a cause also."

Nouvisset would have given worlds to tell him that neither his father nor his father's cause was dead; but Francis was now King of France.

One thing in the rush of emotions and ideas he would tell him: "The King Louis XII. was good, and often was wise. It was his Majesty — whose coffin will lie by the side of that of Anne of Brittany, his true spouse — who said of the new king — Long live the king! — Ami!"

"He did not say, 'Long live the king!' I cannot believe it."

"No!" answered the embarrassed Nouvisset, "*I* said it, — 'Long live the king!'"

"But what of Louis XII.?"

"He said, 'Francis, I am dying! I consign our subjects to your care.'"

Ami was a little surprised that Nouvisset should have seemed at all hesitant about repeating such affectionate sentences as these. Nouvisset was relieved that he had succeeded in keeping back what might have made him seem untrue to the new king. But what the lame knight really meant to say was that Louis XII. once remarked, quite truthfully as it appeared to him, "We are laboring in vain; this big boy will spoil everything for us."

The young knight straightened himself, and simply uttered these words: "I am the loyal subject of Francis I., King of France, and — "

"And your own conscience," interrupted the lame soldier.

Ami was silent and thoughtful.

Nouvisset knew at this hour what a conscience might mean to a soul loyally devoted to the new king. Every touch from Plato and Aristotle which had been transmitted through the words of his proud and wise instructor,

had emphasized the rights and privileges of the moral power in Ami. Every energy which had moulded and tempered the will of Francis I. had tended to make him scornful of these high behests.

Supremely devoted to him in passionate love, invested with a dim consciousness that his own sacred place in God's world was by the side of the gracious Duc de Valois, who had now become sovereign, Ami's mind was not so dazzled by the glitter of royalty, nor was his reason so enslaved by his ambition to excel, as a courtly knight and scholar, that he did not feel the baneful influence upon the new king's arrogant and susceptible spirit, exercised through years of association with falsity, intrigue, and crime. He was reasonably charitable.

Perhaps the early recognition of the character of the duke's environment would keep Ami patient when others grew resentful. It would help him to cling to the king when even Marguerite, his brilliant sister, who always seemed to have had at least the amateur's love for high character and good morals, would surrender to a nature which seemed certain to love and do the wrong.

In a burst of charitable loyalty to his new sovereign, Nouvisset begged Ami never to yield his conviction of the right, or, on the other hand, to expect a man with such culture as was that of Francis I. to adopt a theory of right and wrong such as Ami himself had inbreathed and assimilated in the mountains with puritanical Waldensians.

"You are to pass from my care into the task of caring for one whom you love."

"He has cared for me," said Ami, a little weary of Nouvisset's implied criticism of the character of the young sovereign.

"What said Socrates? 'You can bury me if you catch me!' He knew that the 'I' or 'me' is the soul, Ami. When did Francis care for your soul?"

"When he loved me," was the intense reply.

Nouvisset knew that even the philosophy which he saw Ami had believed, would have no chance just then against such an all-absorbing love. He only trembled when he thought how jealous Ami would certainly become if the king should some day fall in love with some one else and cease to think of him. He thought also how difficult it would be for Ami, with the freedom which was exercised by loving and beloved ones in France, to have a love affair of his own. He dreaded the invasion which jealousy might make upon his bright future.

On these points, however, he said nothing, but continued to moralize in this way: "You must be a light of heaven in a dark vale of earth. The king has had an unfortunate education in morals."

"He is a child of the Holy Church," said Ami. "Bishops and Popes will be his friends."

Nouvisset was not at all astonished that so soon the charm of the Church had bewildered the brain of the orphan. It had come at last. Nouvisset had resolved upon his course. He would not disturb the illusion. He could wait. By and by the seeds in Ami's life and thought would sprout; and the awful weight would lift above them, then totter, then fall.

"The king has known nothing but ambition, superstition, and greed. He has a great heart and a clear head, but his culture has enfeebled his will and moral sense. Who loves Louise of Savoy?"

"Yet any true knight will honor her name," was the instant reply of her former page.

"Ah, yes," said the lame knight, a little surprised that while Ami had so readily comprehended the secret of knighthood, he would not now acknowledge the command of the truer knighthood whose day seemed just before their feet. "Ah, yes! I am proud of that answer, and I am glad that you have made it; but you

admire her not. Who can admire her? She rejoiced that he who dressed the wounds of Chevalier Bayard's horse at Ravenna had left a dying soldier before the tent. No true knight can love one who adores such neglect. She has made for the throne of Francis only a spoiled boy."

Nouvisset had calculated not unwisely upon Ami's reverence for facts, when his jealousy did not consume them.

"Do you know," said Ami, his whole temper having changed suddenly, "what Madame d'Angoulême asked me to record in her journal for the day on which her son — and I love him! — escaped the runaway horse?"

Ami repeated with a smile that well known page of Louise's diary. Historians quote it as follows: "The 25th of January, 1501, Feast of the conversion of Saint Paul. At two o'clock P. M. my son's horse ran away with my King, my Lord, my Cæsar, right across the fields near Amboise."

"No Greek mother ever made a Spartan soldier with such senseless vaporings," said the aged son of Hellas. "Flattery is not so fatal as falsity, however. The king's teachers have been false."

"But was not Artus Gouffier, Sire de Boisy, a true knight?"

"True knighthood for times like these," said the wise Nouvisset, testily, "I have often taught you to believe, has more serious studies than even our knightly Chevalier Bayard attempts. We are at the opening of a mighty epoch. The young king knows the use of arms, but not the use of ideas. He has been with men who blaspheme and stake their souls on a throw of dice. They have taught him that the lower orders, such as you saw at Chilly, have no rights; but the true king will not bully the people. Ami, I determined to educate you, if I

might, amid the classes of which the court of France is ignorant. Gouffier of Portou knew not the task of government which lies before the duke. He could fit our sovereign to reign at a banquet or at a tournament, or to talk for a brief time as if he really possessed learning."

"'T were well if Francis had the learning of his lovely sister," remarked Ami, a little puzzled to know what Nouvisset thought of a woman whom he had then dared to call *lovely*.

"'T were better if he had been left undemoralized by her worship of him."

"Yes, truly," said the youth, his cheek aglow, utterly unconscious of the flame of jealousy which then burned within him.

The knight was pleased at the discovery which was made. He had trembled for the fate of these two susceptible hearts, as Ami and Marguerite d'Angoulême had sat together poring over a manuscript or talking of the Trojan War. Even Louise of Savoy had been anxious. The old knight's difficulties entirely cleared away when he comprehended the fact that Ami had already become envious of her rivalry of love, perhaps of influence.

Nouvisset wanted to say something about a character so inconsistent as was hers, — a soul addicted even then to writing religious hymns and helping a dissolute brother out of the difficulties consequent upon his evil ways. But he had resolved not to touch any of that multitude of fasting saints and mitred sinners, or even Marguerite d'Angoulême, of whom Ami was both so fond and so jealous.

Nouvisset's talk rambled on, as the spirits of Ami, who had begun a little to enjoy the wild optimism which ruled amidst the carousals, turmoils, and indifference of that heyday time sensibly cooled, bringing upon his soul again the sense of the imperious importance of every life, even that of his own, — a consciousness such as he

dimly remembered possessed the soul of his father. In fancy the youth once more stood by his father's side, and heard his deep, noble words. He felt the contrast more vividly than before, and began to wonder how Francis I. should ever be able to rule France. The lights were dim; and silently, as the lame knight fell asleep, the youth sitting near pondered.

A youth at that hour amid those surroundings could not have felt the significance of the weakness of that handsome young monarch, Francis I., as we, looking back upon the young Reformation and the aged Renaissance, feel it to-day. To-day's student of principles and progress cannot help but pity the shade of the king, as in the Louvre he beholds that armor made for a man of six feet rusting beneath the memory of one whose greatest failures grew out of a dominance of physical over spiritual powers.

The governance of Artus Gouffier had so influenced Francis that he was happier at the recognition of his skill when, having found the ferocious boar which he had put in the courtyard of Amboise entering the living-apartments of the castle, he recklessly drove his sword into the beast, and hurled him wounded to death back into the courtyard, than he could be at the success which he achieved at discussing Latin poetry with Marguerite. Only the influence of Ami made him at times more fond of Greek philosophy than of the hunt.

Nouvisset had wakened when Ami said aloud, "I like not Anthony Duprat."

"That is because you love your king," said Nouvisset, who knew Duprat to be a lover of absolute power and a venal servant of the ambitions of Louise of Savoy. "The shadow of the President of the Parliament" — for such was Duprat — "may be lifted by the Constable Bourbon, who will now perhaps be chancellor of France. The king's mother will make her own use of the experience

of the premier, whom she fears; and she will listen — may Heaven grant it! — to the young constable whom she loves."

"Do kings and kings' mothers fall in love with whom they will?" asked the young Waldensian, who had not yet been invited by his sovereign into intimate acquaintance with any of the numerous intrigues of the court.

"Yes," said the old knight, "and they throw them away when they get weary of them; but of *that* we must not talk. Ami, I am glad that you discern the haughty offensiveness of Anthony Duprat."

Nouvisset knew that Ami's unaroused jealousy would soon flame when he beheld the submission into which Duprat was leading the young king. He was more than pleased to be made sure that Ami's prophetic instinct detected the peril of his sovereign.

"Now," said the teacher, with loving pride, as he placed his hand upon the shoulder of the youth whom he had instructed, — "now you pass into the service and associations of Francis I., King of France. I was commanded to assist in your proper education. It has been a constant conflict against many of the theories of your friends and mine; and knowing what your life is to be, it has been in opposition to the tendencies and spirit of the very court which you are to serve."

"Perhaps," gracefully remarked Ami, "I shall be no less able to perform knightly service to his Majesty because I have been thus led. Francis I. can do his own thinking. My value to him and to the world shall lie in the fact that you have taught me to do mine. I am grateful."

"Oh, you brave but ignorant Waldensian!" Nouvisset was about to exclaim; but he had no wish to curb the genius which belongs to youth, or to make another reference to Ami's earlier life. He however proceeded to remark instead: "It is a majestic hour in human history.

I have tried to make your intelligence as broad as your coming duties. You have seen the peasant, and you have lived with him at Chilly. You have known the king, and you are at home in his castle. Be careful of the rights of both. Be sure, — I also dislike Duprat! — be sure that Francis the King of France has no right which infringes upon the best hope of the meanest of his subjects. I beg you to forget not that your own father was a cottager and a peasant."

"But my mother," said the young knight, who was already the victim of a court atmosphere, — "my mother was the daughter of a count."

Nouvisset saw that it was useless to expect this susceptible and brilliant youth to escape entirely the passion for noble ancestry which beset the veriest menial at the castle.

"Your mother told you of knighthood, and you are now able to endure privations, fatigues, and service as a knight. You know thoroughly the use of arms, you were a page of the Duchesse d'Angoulême; and Bayard himself has given you his heartiest word of praise. In games and fencing you are sufficiently successful; and even Robert La Marche is unequal to you in the tilt and tournament."

It was the hour when never so true was the saying of the eloquent Chartier: "The senseless notion of to-day is that a nobleman has no need to know the alphabet; that it is derogatory to a well born man to be able to read and write."

Ami, like all other men, was as egotistic as he was jealous.

"I have this day completed a translation of some of Plato's 'Gorgias' for you, my best helper," said he.

"Yes; you have learned the way to Athens. Ami, you must go back to Greece with France in your bosom, before France can go forward to her destiny. Be true

enough to your king to keep the fires of thought burning at his court. He is generous, extravagant, reckless. I dislike the presence of Duprat. You, my bright boy, you must teach the king the gallantry of learning. Many a lady for whom the knight may rush into the fray is altogether unworthy of such devotion. The only mistress worthy of such blind and heroic love is learning."

"So, also, religion?" inquired the young man.

The Greek said nothing. He was anxious to avoid a topic so delicate, upon which an honest and honorable pagan, such as he was striving to be, could not speak without assaulting all that Ami was soon to hold dear.

CHAPTER XI.

THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH.

The Church of God, — that Church which wound
Around the globe the Apostles' zone:
What clasped that zone, that girdle bound?
The Roman unity alone.

AUBREY DE VERE.

IT was not strange that the page of Louise of Savoy and the chosen friend of the young king should become so soon a loyal child of the Holy Church. The mind of Ami was of the mould, and it was dominated by those forces, which at once rendered him easy of approach and certain of being profoundly influenced by that attractive power wielded by the Holy Catholic Church. If to-day often upon highly cultivated and oppositely educated men the Roman Catholic Church, shorn of the splendid and arrogant prerogatives freely conceded to her at the opening of the sixteenth century, crippled by the victorious march of learning over her innumerable assumptions, out of harmony with the vast powers which drive and guide the gathered significance of modern life, antagonistic to the distinctive intellectual and social influences which make the Europe of to-day more desirable than the Europe of that bloody and ignorant yesterday, many of her miracles abolished by science, more of her saints impaled upon the sharp results of

historical research, still more of the heretics whom she murdered exalted by every dictate of learning and manhood, — if to-day upon these she exerts a fascination so brilliant, so resistless, as to attract them to worship with glad pride at her shrines, what must have been the splendor of the charm upon such a youth at such a lofty moment in the history of this gorgeous institution?

It was before a boy in whose veins rushed the characteristic currents of luxurious France and sunny Italy that this majestic power was to exhibit and enforce her persuasions. Her right to rule him was to be voiced through every eloquent art, and uttered by every commanding tongue. Kings and queens, with their diadems and thrones, were to be missionaries unto him. Cardinals and popes, with blazing apparel and fiery tiaras, were, if possible, to make this promising child a proselyte. Beautiful women amidst dazzling gems, seductive enthusiasts in plume and helmet, crowned rulers in imperial palaces, world-famed scholars in halls of learning, were to vie with renowned saints in pathetic poverty, for the establishment of the Virgin's shrine in the heart of this exiled and orphaned Waldensian. For years the Roman hierarchy, at the moment of most superb rule, with all the pageantry it might assume, with all the holiness to which it must pretend, in the immediate presence of the prince most promising to its haughty ambitions, was to utter its curses, pronounce its benedictions, intone its messages of life and death, exhibit its sublime ceremonial before a homeless boy, without a solitary whisper to dissolve the stupendous illusion.

The bright, quick, nervous, and comprehensive imagination of his father, Gaspar Perrin, was his own; and in him it had all the restless vigor and fearless strength which characterize that faculty in large-brained children. Ami possessed mental energy and grasp; and the imagination of the boy was conscious of no limitations

in its horizon-line, nor did it conceive of a star to which it might not fly. His life was full of pictures, thrown off by the tireless operation of this artist-power; and ever was it searching height and depth for some new or more entrancing vision. Symbolic representations of ideas crowded upon his eager soul; images of abstract truths made his mind a fascinating picture-gallery.

In youth imagination not only dreams her fairest dreams, but, often weary of dreaming, it is the imagination of youth alone which seeks for the largest ministry of noble symbols.

The Holy Catholic Church held, at that hour, the loftiest achievements of imagination in her jewelled hand. That institution alone, at that moment, called upon every energy of such a boy's imagination. If he believed her legends, his imagination used its wildest freedom. If he accepted her solemn and consecrated story, his imagination must dominate his reason. If he allied his hope with her promised destiny, his imagination had pre-empted the realm of the entire future. From the lowest hell peopled with blackest devils, to the highest heaven crowded with angels and resonant with saintly songs; from the farthest past with its thrilling legend to the remotest future with its grandest triumph for the Church, — it was an unapproachable and unimpeded march for this faculty divine.

With the very beginnings of Catholic worship, the imagination was called to the heroic task of sympathy with pictures of sin and of salvation which made the world alive with presences. In the waters of baptism imagination was asked to insert the power of regeneration. In the Holy Eucharist the imagination must detect renewing grace; and despite the lapse of centuries, it was expected to taste the very blood and flesh of Incarnate God. In the sacrament of penance the imagination must see sins forgiven. When some human

being by his side entered holy orders, the imagination must discern the replenishing of a soul by omnipotence itself; and when death came, the imagination was expected to observe in the Extreme Unction, on this side the grave, the consummation of this gracious process; and beyond the grave it was to send its prayers to an imagined world, amid whose lights and shadows the lost friends wander, above them all the Mother of God beseeching her Son to save. No institution or power of earth ever so honored and so bewitched the imagination as has the Holy Catholic Church.

As with a king and a knight he entered the cathedral, his imagination met in passionate admiration the loftier and trained imagination of illustrious architects. In their souls, under the inspiration or command of the Church, sprang the innumerable arches, the stately columns, the solemn vaults which half revealed and half concealed infinity. Human hope had arisen and become incarnate in the vast cathedral. Human aspiration had shot upward, with a wild sublimity which fascinated the youth, in spires lost in the heavens. Far on the summits of the swelling domes, which amid the purpling clouds and azure distances rivalled the solid grandeur of the rich blue hills, as they lifted themselves above the roar of human passions, troubles, cares, and sorrows, stood clear the all-victorious cross, solitary in unvexed brilliance, glowing with triumphant fire.

Every sacred place was either glorious with rags and relics, which latter were the emblems of heroic poverty, or splendid with the testimonies of genius and gorgeous with the tributes of power. The finest genius of earth had studded the long lines of vast interiors. Alabaster and gold had yielded themselves to the artistic energy which worshipped as it toiled. Peasant and prince had piled upon the dazzling altars their devotions and their rubies. Stately processions, with gleaming armor and in

gayest color, even then walked solemnly beneath the lofty arches. Barefooted bishops carried blazing crucifixes; and undefeated soldiers bore the white mantle of the Virgin, under the gigantic cupolas. Nave and transept met in fondest intersection above the uncovered heads of weeping kings and angry popes. Carrara marbles, touched and moulded by the most exquisite art, bas-reliefs, and symbolic sculptures surrounded pulpits resting on carven apostles and martyrs; and within their holy precincts stood the vicars of omnipotent Jehovah.

Without this magnificence, enclosing it like an impregnable fortress, huge walls, created of blocks from the everlasting hills, rose grandly by the side of the pauper's grave and the king's castle. Adorned with façades whose bold and beautiful outlines testified to the pride and piety of ages; decorated gables and pinnacles out of whose recesses looked benignantly saints and prophets; finials and canopies under whose pointed arches faith had placed her symbols; shafts, capitals, and cornices which rehearsed the sacred history and ardent prophecies of seer and psalmist, — the whole noble mass seemed never so much "frozen music" as when the thunders of melody were rolling through its capacious aisles and echoing from arch to arch in the groined and fretted roof, while between the noisy world without and the untroubled world within, through countless windows, the sun poured his richest splendors, flooding the jewelled mitre and the peasants' rags with myriad glories which surged like silent waves midst clouds of incense, against the Virgin's shrine.

For years, without a break, the vision of such triumphs of imagination was to work upon a lad whose best memory held the picture of a little nook in the midst of the mountains, where his father gathered together the ignorant but honest herdsmen and their families and some-

times preached to them in simple words, where poverty was not so poor as to be ragged and monkish, where religion was so barren of ceremonial as to seem mean and insignificant.

Nouvisset and he had often stood together and studied the southern and western fronts of Notre Dame. Then the old man would tell him of the streams of time which had borne down upon their current the ideals, hopes, tendencies, which were embodied in that architecture, and of the wreckage enclosed within those walls.

"See," said Nouvisset, — "see how such a cathedral is the only honest historian! There are energies from great times and from many lands toiling in those workmen. The past is incarnate here in the various styles of architecture. There is the Roman; but it took a hundred currents from far out at sea to make it. Every surge of the waters in the sea of thought or feeling has modified it. Above the Roman, the tale is told of another more aspiring and more worshipping era in the life of men. Away yonder, near the top of the picture, the struggling harmonies of the Parthenon and the Forum are visible. Do you see it?"

Ami was conscious that Greece and Rome, and the France which reached backward to both these nations, towered before him toward heaven. Various and widely separated centuries had told the story of their deepest life in that vast fane.

"If I were not so old," said the teacher, "I would make these churches tell their story. It would be an honest history which they would relate. The men who made them did not mean to write history, and so they did not lie. The true story of man's life lies in his temples, not in the parchment records about battles and sovereigns, not in the mouths of priests, but in the way they have piled stones upon one another. Ami, I hope *you*

will do that. But I am sure you cannot do it and be a popular man at court. Serious things are at a discount. The court is only playing with learning, amusing itself with art; and now it is a little worried by Lefevre, Louis de Berquin, and others of the reforming crowd. It may find them a greater annoyance by and by."

Ami wandered, by permission of the king and priests, into the cathedral itself. It chanced to be the hour when the long and elaborate services incident to the visit of the Bishop of Paris were at their highest point of magnificence. He sat where he beheld pictures and heard harmonies; and as he listened and saw, he wished, in a child's dim way, that little Alke could have known of these; and above all, that his poor slain father had seen and heard what majestic powers were there.

"Certainly," his thought was, "he did not know how beautiful it all is, or how great. If he had known of it all, he would never have been a heretic."

As the cardinal, borne upon the shoulders of four lords, came in with the long procession of knights and auditors, he remembered indistinctly but forcefully his father's unadorned presence or that of the *guide*, as he talked without authority about holy things to the mountaineers. How poor and worn it all seemed now, as the brilliant robe of the cardinal blazed in a new light!

Ami could not forget one of those frosty evenings in the cavern, and the haste in cutting short the worship when the herdsmen and their families huddled together to sing and pray. Art had not touched those rocks on which they sat, moulding them into friezes or transforming them into capitals.

As he had looked about the proud cathedral for an hour before entering, he had gained an impression of its

imposing significance. He had heard that it stood on the spot to which once conquering Romans had been gathered in a pagan shrine. Within those walls Heraclius had sounded the trumpet-call of the crusade more than three centuries before. That nave had been lifted skyward in the reign of Philip Augustus. From the hand of the founder of the porch which he had just left, yea, in this very temple, Saint Louis had taken his staff and scarf. Every building in surrounding spaces seemed to bow in reverence before this consecrated pile. The Hotel of God and the Palace of Justice existed, like the Church of St. Stephen the Martyr, only to be razed to the ground, whenever the larger effect of the great edifice might demand it.

The arches crowded with the statues of kings, the figures of the ancestors of the Holy Virgin, the vast windows filled with scenic grandeur, were forgotten as in solemn procession came pouring in the vicars and canons, choristers and officers, and the one hundred and twenty chaplains of the spiritual lord of Paris. And just then the whole cathedral trembled with the mighty harmonies which a master-hand found in the great organ. As Ami had listened to the love-songs and pious hymns which the king had written, and which he would often sing accompanied with the lute, he had often thought more favorably of the crusading hymns and simple sacred lays which had come to the ears of his childhood. His soul had also been ravished with chants, rendered amidst other gorgeous ceremonies by a cohort of musicians and choristers. Masses of the Gregorian order he had heard, rivalling the secular songs which commemorated battle-fields and had reorganized armies. The choir which sang them was one of the richest gifts which passed from Louis XII. to Francis I. In 1515 Milan heard its notes, while Leo X. was charmed. Melodies low and sweet, psalms echoing with the thunder of battle or the

throb of a shepherd's heart, Te Deums which wove their fine harmonies of the most opulent tones, Glorias which breathed of heaven, had swept Ami into an ecstasy of devotion. The masters, Ambrose, Gregory, Fortunatus, Saint Hilary, and Robert II. of France, Peter Damian, Saint Bernard, and Thomas a Kempis, had each of them allied the tenderest words or the sweetest chords with the genius of the brilliant chorister Guillaume Guinaud, and the king's chapel-master, Claude de Sermisy, to uplift and lead the worship. But never before had the soul of the boy been so moved by the might of sweet sounds. Whispers of angels seemed to linger and float upon the thunderous waves of harmony, as the great building quivered in their movement. It appeared impossible that his father ever could have heard such rich melodies. The Holy Church alone seemed able to wed such chords, and possess such pledges of heaven.

These harmonies seemed to vie with those which had been caught by artists of equal power, and fastened in the great windows of this august fane. The eye became an avenue through which the Church drove its arguments of heavenly beauty and superb dominion; and yet he knew not that he was then the beholder of but one moment's splendor in one building, among many throughout all Europe, whose windows had told, in many-colored poetry and eloquence, the story of the Church. Age after age this eloquence had gathered in opulent strength and increasing beauty. Holy pensiveness had for centuries dwelt under prismatic and harmonious glory. Every variety of tint, every excellence of position, every inspiring or pathetic scene in the life of lawgiver, saint, psalmist, prophet, martyr, Virgin, or Christ, had been put under tribute to furnish with completeness this sacred pageantry. Distinguished artists had labored with the molten sand; illlustrious minds had shaped the fragile products; patient

enthusiasts had selected the pigments; great painters had arranged the brittle pieces with an ingenious industry; eminent architects had set the brilliant combinations in their places, until the choir, apse, altar, and mosaic floor on which Europe worshipped, appeared a sacred dream of transcendent radiance.

CHAPTER XII.

THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH.

> For this,
> The gospel and great teachers laid aside,
> The decretals, as their stuffed margins show,
> Are the sole study. Pope and Cardinal,
> Intent on these, ne'er journey but in thought
> To Nazareth, where Gabriel op'd his wings.
>
> DANTE (*Cary's translation*).

AMI made no wild plunge into the bosom of the Church, because of any desperate desire to escape the perils of infidelity. His personality was simply weaker than the institution which overshadowed him. The imagination of the boy was taken by storm.

Not less impressive, however, to a youth of this nature was the impression which the Church, ancient and catholic, made upon such as was he, as he was led by so amiable an instructor into the study of history.

Since that hour when Ami sat at the feet of Nouvisset, the unreformed Catholic Church has added so many dark and bloody pages to the story of humanity, and history has been written with such honest freedom, that we can scarcely appreciate the impression made upon his mind as he saw this ever-young and growing institution stretch the list of her triumphs from the hour when, having fought with infuriated beasts, she rose out of the dust of the Roman amphitheatre, to the hour when his

grandfather and others of the heretical Waldensians fell under the hands of Innocent VIII.

As he read of the revolutions which had crushed empires and overset thrones, he saw the papal chair steady through them all. He saw the inextinguishable youth of the Church amidst the sneers of her foes. As Chaucer in England had smiled at the Church, the Cathedral of Milan had begun to rise starward. While Poggio laughed and amused the South of Europe, she was burning Lollards, sending La Salle into the wilds of America, and commanding Veronese and Fra Angelico to decorate her temples. Something resistless and grand lay in the charm of these gathered centuries upon her brow. She had stood, in the person of Gregory IX., in that hour when the University of Cambridge was founded, and the Cathedral of Cologne was yet in the mind of Conrad. Years before, when England was rejoicing over Magna Charta, she was eloquent in Saint Francis, or pious in the person of Elizabeth of Hungary.

Did Worms Cathedral begin to attract the footsteps of a solitary and rebellious monk? She was there when, five hundred years before, its foundations were laid. She had crowned Charlemagne; she had conquered Mahomet; she had entered England with Saint Austin; she had seen Romans come back from Britain; she had beheld Attila defeated and Aurelius die; she had bled under Vespasian; she had walked into Nero's prisons unafraid; she had looked out, even from them, backward into the eternal past, feeling her relationship to the purpose of God, while Rome staggered, "drunken with the blood of the saints, and drunken with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus."

As Ami learned of strifes and factions, pillaged towns and burned cities, mobs and armies, crusades and dismembered kingdoms, he saw some Ambrose unquailing in the presence of a Theodosius, Flavius successfully

begging for Antioch, or Hildebrand holding barefooted Henry IV. at his command amid the snows of Canossa. From the moment when Felix trembled unto that in which Ami beheld Louise of Savoy exercised as to the opinions of the Pope, the Holy Church had preserved this august, imperative, and haughty dominion. She seemed the one historic fact, changeless and unchangeable. Human passion had builded fires at her feet which she had quenched. Royal licentiousness had brought flagrant sins in her sight, and the sinner she had excommunicated. Rich barons had oppressed her poor, until she had punished their rapacity. Goth and Hun and Vandal had sought to destroy every glory of old Rome, while she had hid the powers of learning and of art in her monasteries, and erected a new and spiritual Rome upon the ruin.

She had used all sorts of men, — Peter the Hermit and Polycarp, Barnard and Augustine, Alcuin and Saint Anthony. Her line encircled the history of human nature, and her command lay upon every heart.

As he dreamed of his father and that little church amidst the hills, he was perplexed that such a trifling and infantile movement as that of the Waldensians should have ever measured its babyhood with the long motherhood of the Holy Church.

"Could my father have read a page of history?" thought he. "Is it possible that he knew of the councils which are beacons, and the fathers which were flames of fire, stretching from the very opening into the catacombs to the day of the Pragmatic Sanction? He was not unlearned. What could have possessed his mind, that he forgot the ever-advancing tread of this gigantic power, and solemnly satisfied himself with the child's-play of this new-born heresy!"

So mightily did the awe-inspiring past, huge and inexplicable, fill the eye of Ami's soul. He was not come

to that intellectual manhood which perceives how often ivy-like fancies of ignorance conceal the rough walls within which dwell horrible tyrannies; nor had he learned how that ancient institution threw the shadow of its imagined sacredness upon something far more venerable, far more sacred, — the soul of man.

Reason often seems late in coming to the rescue of true faith.

Every such superficial notion of what constitutes salvation as would belong to the mind of a youth without a man's experiences with sin, was satisfied — is still satisfied — with the priest and the absolution. Had not God's authority been deposited with his confessor? If full satisfaction had not been made, surely the experiences of purgatory would make heaven certain. In obeying the visible hierarchy the boy *saw* the power which saved. It taxed not those powers of his soul to look beyond, — powers which are later in maturing. Those conceptions of sainthood which accompany spiritual youth, — the lonely ascetic living his negative, self-conscious, unaggressive life; the meditative pietist, introspective and calm, fleeing from the world, in quick retreat from the battle of life with its hopes and despair, its fascinating ambitions and its ennobling problems, — these were satisfied in the roll of martyrs, confessors, and heroes of the Holy Church.

As he remembered the struggling in his father's prayers at the fireside, and the fervor with which he fought out the battle of life in the world, he thought: "Oh, if he had known of some monastery in which the world never came, or of some priest whose assertion of pardon was ratified before the throne of Heaven, then my father could have been the saint he wished to be."

A present, living, growing teacher, with plenitude of power to condemn or to forgive, — a teacher which gave no invitation or command to men to do unpleasant, toil-

some, bewildering reasoning, — so quieted his mind, so reigned above the rising tumult of debate in his soul, that he gave over to the Church in fee simple his entire spirit.

"Oh, if my mother," said he, as he thought of one conversation which he dimly remembered to have heard long ago, — a conversation in which she sadly broke back to the old Church, and cried for the Eucharist, — "oh, if my mother had lived, it may be that he who died for the new heresy had died in peace in the bosom of the Church!"

Sufficient truth the Church has always held to make her better than the world from whose tyranny men desire to escape. With ease she comes to the soul of a penitent or to the heart of a struggling saint, and advocates an ever-present grace. She, however, commands peace where there is no peace. She rouses the spirit to desire the ministries of her peculiar power; she puts a swift forgiveness upon vices, and makes sacred the spiritual conceit which is its consequence. Thus, as Ami was swept on into the atmosphere of a designing hypocrite, amid the splendors of the court of her son Francis I., the unreformed Church caught the weaknesses of his impulsive youth and blessed them.

The warm currents of his mother's blood gave to this youth a large emotional life. The Church of the sixteenth century dazzled the imagination, and developed while it fed the emotions of men.

The music breathed those sounds which rolled through the chambers of the heart in deep diapason. Every chord which uttered tenderness, every note which touched the sensibilities, every instrument which swept the feelings, every combination which deepened sorrow for sin, quickened a love of goodness, filled the eye with tears of gratitude or of remorse, was employed with unsurpassed art and incredible constancy. The windows

chronicled those scenes in which the boy Joseph had been sold, the child Samuel was called of God, the persecutor Saul was beholding the Christ, the Holy Saviour was agonizing in death, the saintly Stephen was being stoned, or the Mother of God was enthroned on high.

The altar was one rich, vast, constant appeal to the feelings, — agitating them by its pictures, rousing them by its services, blessing them by its awful significance. There quivered the sacred heart; there bled the riven side of the Redeemer; there died in inconceivable pain the Son of God. A single week in the life of a worshipper was sufficient to create an era in the history of a soul's emotional life. A Calvary — a dark, hideous, consecrated Calvary — approached painfully by slow progress in prayer, and with meditation upon the one saddest scene in human story; seven stations, each more awful in suggestions of grief, leading at last to a realistic reproduction in the mind of the most affecting of all deaths, — this alone opened the floodgates of the soul.

Not even the worship was the strongest power to engage this boy's feelings. Death had come upon his life; and he often had wondered if life might not have been less tragic if his mother had been spared to him. He knew that there had been moments when her intense zeal for the cause of the Waldensians flagged a little; and once he buried his face in her lap when she told him not to hate the statue of the Virgin. He could yet feel her hand upon his head.

To this boy the Holy Church came with the realm beyond the grave, peopled and very human in its ways. Angels walked with the lost and loved. Prayers which issued out of his affection or his faith as a witness to solitude and to suffering, reached, as he was led to believe, beyond the grave, and filled the lives of the dead with benediction.

Soon, very soon, the height of his emotional life bore

a form, — the form which he adored. He was a motherless boy. In immaculate splendor, clad in sinless beauty, his guardian, his friend, Mary the Virgin Mother of God was enthroned in silence and without ceremony upon the heart of the orphan. He could not help thinking that his own mother looked like the vision which he beheld when he took the sacrament.

CHAPTER XIII.

FADING FACTS AND LIVING DREAMS.

Glory and boast of Avalon's fair vale,
How beautiful thy ancient turrets rose!
Fancy yet sees them in the sunshine pale
Gleaming, or more majestic in repose,
When West away the crimson landscape glows,
Casting their shadows on the waters wide.
How sweet the sounds that, at still daylight's close,
Come blended with the airs of eventide,
When through the glimmering aisle faint misereres died.

BOWLES.

LET us go back to Somersetshire, to the England of monastic days. As in the last hour of that sunny afternoon he welcomed Vian with rebukes and tears, when the latter entered his apartments in Glastonbury Abbey, tired and dust-covered from his journey homeward, Abbot Richard Beere, conservative and politician, was sure that a long and unwearied effort must be made to uproot from the rich soil of Vian's young mind the seeds which two such men as More and Erasmus had, perhaps unwittingly, sowed therein. He knew enough of the boy's character and breeding to abandon all attempts at forcing him into credulity, or at flogging him into hearty obedience. He was both sadder and more hopeful when he saw that Vian trembled only at his tears. Man of the past that he was, the head of Glastonbury felt

that he must summon up the entire force of that past of which he was master, if he should obtain for the Church the future which gleamed upon the brow of Vian. It never occurred to him that a man holds the past only as he seizes the present, and through that the future. It never concerned him, or his plans, that youth gives no surer witness to its own genius than when it beats its wings uneasily against institutions whose glitter and antiquity have bedazzled the feeble eye of age.

"He is not at all impressed with the dignity of the Church," said the abbot one day, as if forced by the disappointing months to a doleful conclusion.

The next day he would win him, and astonish him by the splendor with which a servant of the Holy Church in his position could go fishing.

But Vian looked upon the scene much as did Fra Giovanni, who, walking with a brother, — the custom of Glastonbury compelled them to go two and two, no man being companionless out of the enclosure, — and encountering the magnificent cavalcade, said with fine irony, "This cannot be a procession composed of men who have taken a vow of perpetual poverty, and who do not love the gaudy pleasures of the wicked world. What think you?"

The long retinue of more than one hundred elegantly costumed monks, bearing arms which glittered in the fire of that bright day, followed after the abbot, who was preceded by a solitary and muscular brother bearing a huge shining crucifix.

Every doubt as to the persons composing the train would have been banished, even in a mind less acquainted with such pompous scenes than Fra Giovanni's, by their advance.

"Ah," said Giovanni, "I shall have to flog the abbot for his pride. Yet it is all so churchly; it is only the Lord Abbot of Glastonbury toiling alone, as you see,

through that crowd of sycophants, who have found out somehow that he is going fishing for a perch, and who kneel like menials for his blessing. Ha! he is as nobly attired for meeting a pike, as he will be on his way to Parliament, when he will astonish Harry himself with his mitre and crosier."

Vian had fled to literary pools, and was casting for living ideas.

As the afternoon wore away, and the shadows in the scriptorium grew longer, the young man read from the Scripture which he was copying with another novice of the same age, the story of the disciples fishing in Lake Gennesaret. It was boyish logic, perhaps, and certainly quite evident heresy, that led him to make certain remarks to the librarian who was the monk nearest to Giovanni in humor and sympathy.

"Then Peter himself had no retinue, even when he fished in the lake; did he?"

"No, the Church was poor in those days."

"And yet that was the Church of apostles and martyrs," said Vian, with a furtive glance.

"Even so; but the Holy Church was poor then," remonstrated the librarian, who was humorous as he lost ground.

"And pure, also?" asked Vian; "poor and pure!"

"Even then Judas was a disciple."

"But Judas, who was not poor very long, was not made a cardinal or a bishop," firmly added this son of a Wycliffite, as he reverted to the scene of the morning. "It appears to me — I know that I can understand little — but it appears to me that the Holy Church is not so pure as when she was poor. Why should the abbot — and he is not even Peter's successor — why should he be guarded and wear costly garments? The people who fell on their knees before him as he passed, acted like slaves, and they seem very ragged. Peter had no silver and

gold; yet he blessed people like unto them. Nobody seems to want to bless them now, except when those who bless are sure to receive silver or gold. I know I cannot understand it." And Vian went to work again, copying with firm and excellent hand a page of vellum which lay before him.

"The novice is a thinker," said the monk, as he found Giovanni a moment later, and related to him the conversation.

Both of them smiled, when Giovanni said: "It will be the turn of the thinker soon. The abbot has something else on his line, besides a hook in that novice. Poor, disappointed abbot! He knows he has failed to impress Vian with the grandeur of the Church when the Holy Church goes fishing. He will try it again when the Church goes to Parliament."

At length the day which Giovanni's remarks anticipated came. The soft airs were floating like whispers over the green fields, carrying within them the silent shadows of the white clouds above. The cavalcade was ready to start; but Vian, who was to ride at the side of the abbot, could not be found.

What a night the boy had endured! When the morning bell tolled for matins, he was on his knees alone, praying, as he had heard the Lollards pray at Lutterworth. Taking his seat in the church, he sang with a trembling and weary voice the fifteen Psalms, tears running down his cheeks. Fra Giovanni noticed his emotions, when Nocturn came, and then missed him, when the chanter and choir returned from lauds. No one thought the fishing excursion of the day before to have been such an event as to take the sweetest voice out of that choir. Tierce and Morning Mass found him not; and he was absent from the procession which wended its way to the chapter-house.

The sub-prior hastily discovered these facts, as he

sought to relieve the agitated mind of Abbot Richard Beere. Could it be that Vian had again escaped?

It was past time for the cavalcade to start.

Still did the airs play tenderly with the tears which quivered upon the stern, hard face of the abbot. He would not move toward London. He believed, in a dim but potent way, that the child, who now was rapidly coming to be a man, — the novice Vian, — had a hold upon the future which he would fain acquire for the Church. It might be lost if he should depart at that moment.

Could it be that the heresy of the hour had such influence?

Not this heresy alone. The heart of the Middle Ages had what were heresies also to monasticism, — heresies which were often more potent and disruptive than those of the head.

That magnificent procession had halted because of a boy's vision, — a vision which rose above the towers of Glastonbury, and outshone the splendor of the crucifix.

While the abbot was worried, and hastened to the inevitable conclusion that he must go to Parliament at once, the sub-prior was beholding something of the beauty of that vision, — a tattered thing, torn as it was from this youth's bosom; still its fragmentary beauty held him charmed.

The sub-prior himself, months before, had made the acquaintance of a wonderfully interesting specimen of human nature, to say the least, when he brought Vian back on that afternoon from More and Erasmus, who were glad enough to give him up to Glastonbury. His monastic soul had gone out with the boy's hopes; and his worn and wasted heart pulsated in deepest sympathy with him, as the youth said, "I hate all monks, and I love Master More."

The remark had precipitated a vast amount of vague sadness in the sub-prior's soul; and now it was full of hard crystals of doubt. He became less servile in his thoughts; and often he saw, or thought he saw, the dawn just ahead. Still he was sub-prior, and that position he need not give up; still would he be loyal to the abbot. He quite loved the young Vian; and when, in obedience to the abbot's command, he continued his search until he found the youth in concealment, living in a sort of dream, as he afterward told the prosaic head of that abbey, his heart was touched; and instead of a rebuke, the sub-prior gave Vian a pious kiss. It was also sufficient to emphasize the protest within him against the shadow of the past. The sub-prior had kissed the future.

Parliament and the abbot's duties there must be attended to; and on the assurance that all was well with Vian, the procession started, the heart most set upon its success feeling sad, as the abbot moved on and mused concerning the dreaming novice.

"I wonder what he can be dreaming of. Ah! Joseph dreamed," said he.

What a dream for one who had already shown himself a rationalist! What a vision for one who had so soon found his life environed with such hard realities as set themselves against even the propriety of such an hallucination as was Vian's!

It was an old dream, and yet in the midst of his mental agony, which arose at his contrasting the Church of the past with its fraudulent representative in the present, it came to the youth like a new dream, so unchurchly, so apparently impious, but also so imperious. The sub-prior in after years saw into the working of his mind. In a youth's dim way Vian was conscious of what was going on within himself even then. He had felt himself entirely appropriated by that great ecclesias-

tical institution, and had thought indefinitely of his own intellectual individuality only as a dear wreck.

At the moment when he was discovered by the sub-prior, he knew that he, even he, abided; and he was held to that faith by a dream, — a vision rather, which could bode nothing but disaster at Glastonbury.

It was a lover's dream.

Friar Noglas of Lutterworth had told the abbot about what he was pleased to term "the child's mental affliction." Even his mother expressed the hope that no pains would be spared to render him free from such a mysterious phantasm. Only Vian, the child, took a sane view of the remarkable phenomenon. It had not recurred for five years until on that night after the sight of the fishing expedition. It had never remained so completely in charge of all his mental faculties, nor did it ever appear so sacred as then.

A lover always dreams in portraits. Even if his fancy should put about the figure which he beholds a landscape like Lorraine's, love yet paints like Rembrandt; and the richest lights and shadows fall upon some human face. Vian was born a lover; and in every quality of his mind he was a painter. It was not remarkable, therefore, that in his very boyhood there should come slowly and abide upon his soul a picture which had all the hues of ideality and all the lines of reality within its exquisite features, — a portrait into which his vivid imagination and his affectionate heart poured their treasured hopes, — the portrait, as he loved to say, of his "soul's mate." It used to furnish his mother with a sort of curious amusement to hear this loving boy of hers, in the long summer afternoons, talk of a radiant little maiden whom he had never seen, and whom she knew that her child had not seen.

She at first had thought it a most interesting and harmless exercise of fancy and affection in which he indulged

himself, when, with his brown curls still clinging to his boyish head, he entertained her alone beneath the purpling lilac-trees in the garden, discoursing, like a poet, of his loved one. By and by the child himself apparently saw that the phenomenon of a little boy dealing so deeply with such passionate energies as this floating portrait had inspired within him, caused his mother no little concern. He always remembered hearing a conversation which occurred without his presence being noted or desired, in which the priest Noglas was taken into the secret; and asked if he did think there could be the slightest danger of madness in such a persistent and intense devotion to an ideal love.

The priest was worried. He nevertheless assured her, and avowed that Lutterworth thought Vian was to be a great man, and that it must be expected that he would do strange things. True, the boy was half spoiled.

He learned then, for the first time, that in him centred the pride and hope of the whole community, and that his rather large acquirements at such an age had astonished the respectable talents of his elders; but as the little fellow had heard them talk of means which should be tried to divert his mind from this picture which always stood on the easel of the thought and hope within his soul, he ran in upon the conversation, and hid his face within his mother's bosom, as he told her that he never could be great or good without seeing constantly this picture of his little mate. The priest retired to make his plans.

That love had taken possession of Vian's life; it was the central light whose radiance made everything else visible. It was the solitary silken string on which jewel after jewel of that young life was being strung. The bewildered mother saw it long ago. Throughout a boyhood which was guarded by care and ambition, as the

days were lost in months and the months in years, this solitary and misunderstood boy was painting that ideal portrait, — that exquisite picture of the sweet little girl who lived somewhere in God's universe, and who already was and forever would be the real wife of his soul.

Gradually did the portrait grow. As he grew to be an older child, so did this lovely girl-image. The picture seemed to gather loveliness and beauty from every touch of his experience. Did his eye catch sight of a beautiful girl? The one immaculate flash of glory which made her beautiful went into that picture which he never forgot. His father knew nothing of this process. Did his father ever read from the line of a poet, or from the fragment of an orator, whose delayed message now came upon the sleepy mind of Europe, some fine characteristic which belonged to human nature? Instantly this portrait which Vian was producing bore another delicate line, and Vian's loved one seemed more lovely. As he played over the hills and through the dew-covered clover, or climbed upon the hill-top to watch the soft tints of the rising sun, or gathered bunches of wild-flowers for her whom he had never seen, did he find some beauteous tint which he had never beheld before? Then he became a painter again; and his fancy and love mingled that erubescent color with the rich blushes upon her cheek.

As sometimes he came through the wood, and the birds were still, and only the lark in the meadow below the streamlet along whose flowery banks he wandered so much alone, was talking in bird-tones to its mate, he would sit upon the soft grass and listen. Oh, how far away did she seem! Then he listened again. Oh, how near she came!

He could almost see her golden hair, and her sweet lustrous eyes, — that much of the picture he never

changed. He could not listen longer; the strain was too intense. She was too far away. And then he would gather the ripe berries, oozy with richness and glossy with beauty; and then as he would string them for her, placing one after another upon the long grasses which he found, he would listen again for her voice.

One day he heard what his heart certainly knew was *her* voice. His dreams always took him to that spot where for years he had gone, as upon a soul-pilgrimage, and left his tears with the morning dews. Then the great forest-trees threw their cool shadows upon it, and the wild roses made the air fragrant round about; and the brown-thrush uttered his notes amidst the woodland leaves.

Now, to the eye of a traveller in rural England, it is only a plain, prosaic pasture-field, with the masses of sunlight falling unbroken upon its simplicity; yet at the last visit one who bears the name of Vian found there a beautiful wild rose, which lived upon a broken and ancient little bush, and seemed to have come out of all the changed circumstances to tell him of an experience whose beauty was perennial. That rose was carried to Vian's grave, and placed over his very heart.

The spot is as sacred as heaven. There love had heard the voice of his loved one, whose portrait had been worshipped in his soul.

As before that morning, to which he was always returning, his imagination had made its happiness out of lines and colors; so after that morning when he thought he heard her voice, imagination found also a noble delight in tones. His fancy had, up to that day, lived in his eye; henceforth it should also live in his ear. He must not only look, he must listen, if his soul were to have the fullest joy.

Sometimes a tone of the voice will do everything to clear up and make vivid the lines of a face. Oftentimes one finds the mind looking upon some mental picture and trying to remember some dear line in its exactness, when suddenly one hears the voice as of old, and the ear helps the eye, so that one seems to have a definite picture before the soul. It was so with Vian when the sub-prior found him. His soul had listened; and he had heard her voice. Instantly his closed eyes *saw* her, as he never saw her before. Oh the rapture of that hour, as he both saw and heard!

Of course the voice was just the voice which he had expected to hear. If he had not been thinking of her at all, he would have discovered those unique tones in the midst of universal confusion; but as his soul was intently thinking of her, the sounds which seemed to have floated to earth from heaven took his hushed spirit prisoner, and he said, "*That* can be no other voice than hers!"

It cannot be considered marvellous that so thoroughly did these tones harmonize with the pictured tones which his eye had beheld. The voice is the surest interpreter of character; its tones lie deeper than the lines of the face. Yet behind face and voice is the one soul; and each of its revelations harmonizes with the other, when both are understood. Vian's sympathetic spirit heard on that June day the very tones which he had somehow felt must lie in the breast of this peerless little girl. With what commanding sweetness did they seize upon his very life; with what delicate authority did they touch his happy heart!

Just as that fancied portrait had filled every chamber of his vision with its radiant beauty and satisfied every demand of his growing culture, so these sounds, which floated in upon his soul from the *somewhere* of God, ran their melodious way along through the avenues of his

mind, roused his thought and sentiment to a strange ecstasy, and bade his soul quiver with loving emotion, as he gave audience. It seemed as if his very nature had been created for the superb harmonies which appeared to lie in her simplest tone. His spirit had become a palpitating atmosphere, which caught up and transmitted the veriest whisper of her melody. Every sound came into him like a sweet wanderer; and it entered through unknown doors into his heart, to find itself forever at home. Surely there was but one voice in the whole universe; and his ear had listened to its music. Thrilling, rich, and powerful, its melody had stirred him again, even to tears, when the sub-prior found him.

Were they tears of sorrow which came because he had heard her again? No, they were tears of joy that what he had so often seen had at last uttered something to his soul again. It seemed that every sweet chord which he had ever heard elsewhere was woven into her song. The sighing of the tree-tops in the evening; the laughing, rippling melodies of the brooks which tinkled in every silvery drop like a chorus of clear-voiced bells; the liquid notes of the bird which just then flew out into the sunlight to be touched with its gold, and back again into the emerald forest; the flute-like harmonies which rose from those æolian harps which were then made as the slender reeds beyond him deflected the fragrant southern breeze, — all these, beside something so incommunicable, so celestial, so unheard before, lived, moved, and spoke in that incomparable voice. He was back again at Lutterworth. He stood listening; the long evening shadows again disputed on his face with the retreating sunshine; the voice died away. With tears like unto those which the sub-prior detected upon his cheeks even now, he had often thanked God for what he had heard, and gone wearily homeward.

The sub-prior withdrew; but he understood it. All that night Vian lay listening in vain for that one voice.

> "Wearily came to the heart of the night
> Echoes of music which lived in the light:
> Drearily weeping, the night throws away
> Jewels which flashed on some fair yesterday."

He kept saying to his soul, "Somewhere and at some time I will see that face and hear that voice."

CHAPTER XIV.

A VISITOR AT GLASTONBURY.

Hard by, the monks their Mass were saying;
The organ evermore
Its wave in alternation swaying
On that smooth swell upbore
The voice of their melodious praying
Toward heaven's eternal shore.

AUBREY DE VERE.

ON the evening of the 25th of May there arrived at Glastonbury Abbey an innocent-looking man, who immediately excited the interest of every one, from the Lord Abbot to the least important of the lay-brethren. He was a countryman, without doubt; and in his dress he bore every evidence of having no small desire to measure up both to the duties which devolved upon him and the place of their performance. Most of his wardrobe was upon his body; and it consisted of such a collection of excesses in apparel as indicated that the wearer had perhaps borrowed for the occasion, of each of his neighbors, the one most pretentious article of their possessions, and gathering them together thus, had intended to impress Glastonbury, for which he must have a noble regard, with his fitness as a guest. His sturtops were new and unworn by any contact with the rough roadway which he must have travelled.

"How did he get here without even soiling the laces of his boots?" was the query propounded by the humorous Giovanni. "He must have dropped down from the skies. Ah, no; that could scarcely be. The trunk-hose, stuffed as they are, cannot be of heaven. There would not be room for all the saints of the calendar, if many of the celestial inhabitants should persist in wearing trunk-hose like unto his."

The garters he wore were of Granada silk, which contrasted unpleasantly with his close-fitting doublet, fastened as it was around his waist by a most elaborately decorated girdle which belonged to another day, and never seemed quite sure of keeping together the inharmoniously colored garments which it touched. On his head was a green hat of French manufacture, which had a brim gayly embroidered in silver and gold; and under his significant chin peeped out an elegantly worked shirt-band, whose whiteness was broken in upon by wandering threads of Coventry blue.

"The great breeches which he has upon him must have made his journey wearisome; for he came to us on foot," remarked Fra Giovanni, as he sought to contain his humor, when the visitor came sweating through the cloisters, ambling along industriously with the sub-prior, the preposterous amount of stuffing in his trunk-hose making a respectable distance between him and the superior.

The monks became jolly, as Giovanni led the way for their merriment. Gratitude vied with good-humor; for every one who came to break the dull monotony of the monastic life was looked upon as a benefactor. Not always, however, were the monks so careful to preserve ascetic decorum so far as to prevent their having what fun they might find in the appearance of an itinerant saint or the blunders of a peripatetic sinner who chanced to travel in their paths.

One of the monks was set to entertain the stranger, and soon found out that he had come from a part of the country where abbeys were not held in the highest esteem, and that his business connected itself with Vian.

"From Lutterworth?" That explained the carefulness of the sub-prior and the anxiety of the Lord Abbot. The visitor answered that his home was at Lutterworth, and showed that, in spite of all Wycliffite influences, he was ignorant and superstitious, and possessed an awful sense of the obsequious regard which he ought to show to a Benedictine friar at Glastonbury Abbey.

Fra Giovanni had been very dull of late; but this chance for entertainment at the visitor's expense was too good to lose.

"I hold myself able," said he to Abbot Richard, "indeed, I am willing, so to entertain the visitor who has come from the heretical atmosphere breathed by John Wycliffe, that he will go back emptied of all local pride, and made humble before the sacredness of this venerable abbey."

The idea impressed the abbot as a good one. Truly, the days of hope for stalwart Churchmanship were not numbered, so long as Giovanni would undertake voluntarily to undo what the Lollard influence had done at Lutterworth within the mind of this somewhat pompous visitor, Thomas Jenson.

"Set about it, with my desire and blessing. He is here to treat concerning the novice, Vian. I am beset with heavy cares. I do not trust his laxity of doctrine. He is full of unwise conceit of Lutterworth," was the grateful reply of the head of Glastonbury.

"I will extract the whole of Lutterworth from him," promised Giovanni.

Now Giovanni had determined to attack this problem through those immense trunk-hose, which he believed were stuffed with wool. The Lord Abbot supposed that

the Italian monk meant to proceed through Thomas Jenson's head or heart. The name, Thomas Jenson, flew from monk to monk with astonishing rapidity; and every monk smiled, when it was known that Fra Giovanni proposed to show to the ploughman from Lutterworth the sights of the abbey.

"I will take the local pride out of him," said Giovanni.

Visiting the House of Parliament, under the invitation or command of Abbot Richard Beere, several of the monks had seen the posts placed in the walls which upheld a sort of scaffold, upon which those were accustomed to sit who wore these great breeches. Giovanni had been informed that sometimes they were filled with sawdust or with bran; and he determined, at the proper moment, to pierce one of Thomas Jenson's hose, not to reduce its compass, but to take the local pride out of him. That proper moment had arrived.

Standing in front of the abbey clock, which had sufficiently excited the wonder of the stranger from Lutterworth, the humorous monk explained to him that the Devil loved to ensnare a victim whom he might catch exhibiting undue curiosity in sacred places; that no one who had ever absolutely obeyed the instructions which Giovanni was about to impart had ever lost his soul in that way; that, on the other hand, others who had disdained such advice had become the prey of the Evil One; and that, to be specific, those who desired to behold the glories of the abbey must on no account look backward. "We gain heaven," said the monk, in pious tone, "in looking forward and upward."

Giovanni had punctured the breeches. A small hole was left open in the lower part of Thomas Jenson's trunk-hose. Bran began to fall upon the floor of the south transept, in a small but constant stream. Still did the man of Lutterworth marvel at the splendors of this religious house. Giovanni now led his victim through the

Chapel of St. Joseph, leaving behind the visitor a stream of bran five hundred and eighty feet in length. Out into the cloisters and into the arcade they went, on to the east side, even to the entrance of the chapter-house, where the monks were assembled for confession. As monk after monk afterward sought the ear of his confessor, that solemn individual's ear was astonished with a burst of laughter from the sin-burdened brother.

The Lord Abbot's throne was immediately in front. Thomas Jenson had not looked behind him, though for long minutes he had been suffering agonies of distrust and fear. Giovanni's face was serene. But the Lord Abbot beheld the shrunken visitor, who, his eyes assured him, was the veritable Thomas Jenson of Lutterworth. The latter was perspiring immoderately, and for a while he gazed first at the abbot, then toward Giovanni, as if he desired to ask if it would be perilous to remove the sweat-drops from his face, and at length he was piteously insisting that in spite of the fact that he had obeyed every injunction of Giovanni's, the Devil had infested his trunk-hose.

"I did not know," said he, "that the Devil could get into such holy places."

For this once Abbot Richard dared publicly to censure Fra Giovanni; but one look from the Italian silenced the throne. Every monk laughed; and Fra Giovanni agreed with the Lord Abbot, that if any brother in Glastonbury had played the part of Satan with Thomas Jenson's breeches, he himself should see that the culprit suffered severe flagellation at his hands.

"The local feeling has gone out of him, at least so far as his hose is concerned," said Giovanni to the sacristan. "I was set to reduce his importance and his impression of himself, and to produce an impression upon him of our importance. I have not succeeded; but I have made it impossible for any monk to get the same impression

which he at the first made upon my innocent brethren in Glastonbury Abbey."

Thomas Jenson had come to the abbey to represent the proper authorities of Lutterworth, and to announce that the property which belonged to Vian, under the will of his father, must now be given over to his uses, and that Vian, with a competent witness from Glastonbury, must proceed to Lutterworth and at once conclude the business.

Thomas Jenson, in other years, had known Vian's father, and in spite of his ignorance, had become one of the guardians of the property. It consisted of an oaken box, containing many manuscript letters, and the books which, in obedience to the will, the other guardian had purchased.

Abbot Richard, who himself had once been a devotee of "the new learning," had not a single perfectly orthodox friar at Glastonbury with whom he dared to trust what small funds might thus pass into the treasury of the abbey. His mind had often remarked that the monks of his house who set such store by correctness of belief, were most reprehensibly derelict in practice, and that the men of "the new learning" were both honest and clean.

He chose as the companion of Vian, the sub-prior, who had often served Abbot Richard, though he had given him no little trouble and cause for further worry, because he had allowed the brethren who could read the Greek and Latin authors to converse freely concerning what they read, and to talk together of well-known heretics. But the sub-prior was at least honest; and he was trying to be loyal to the traditions of Glastonbury in spite of his growing thought.

From the hour in which Vian was torn from the affectionate but temporary protection of Erasmus and

Thomas More, he had never once lost sight of a hope bound up with the life of the famous Dutch scholar. For all these years had his thoughts wandered away from Glastonbury unto Erasmus; and when on that May day of 1514, the sub-prior of the abbey was sent with him on the mission to Lutterworth, Vian was delighted to find out that they were instructed also to visit at the University of Cambridge, in order that the sub-prior might consult with reference to the education of certain young men who had been placed under the care of the abbot. There Vian knew he would be accorded the privilege of seeing Erasmus again.

Little did Abbot Richard suspect, as he was thinking that day that for a time at least Vian would not be able to hear the heretical monks of Glastonbury quote Greek and Latin odes, that, instead, this hopeful child of his heart should overhear a conversation in Cambridge which was calculated to make such an one as he a pronounced heretic.

They had been in Cambridge three days, when they were asked into Queen's College. It seemed the edge of heaven to Vian, as, with the sub-prior, he waited for a word with the scholar. The eye of the boy soon gazed upon the figure of Erasmus, as he, acute and self-contained as he appears in the etching of Van Dyke, rose to make a correction in the manuscript which contained the results of his labors on the works of Saint Jerome, or as he sat, as we still may behold him on the canvas of Holbein, holding in one hand the pen with which he wrote the paraphrase of Saint Mark, and bearing upon the fingers of the other an elaborate adornment of rings. His white and delicate skin was not less lustrous, because of the dark yellow hair which fell about his ears. His tireless blue eyes were set like warders above a face whose principal features were a nose whose every portion trembled with the man's emotion, or stood out

sharply like a sword keen as his wit, and a mouth whose flexibility and power any orator might have coveted. When he spoke, what he said, and the sentences in which his ideas were expressed, became witnesses of the fact that he was putting the instrumentalities of learning into order, and that it was possible that the machinery of scholarship might soon be used for loftier purposes than his measure of courage should adopt. There was always a tentative and hesitant tone in his voice. The deep friendship of Erasmus for Andreas Ammonius, who was the Pope's collector in England and Latin Secretary to Henry VIII., indicated how easily eminence which shuns great crises seeks the companionship of mediocrity.

Even the sub-prior enjoyed the witticisms of Erasmus, as they fell unsparingly upon cardinals and monks.

"My good friend here," said Erasmus, pointing to the secretary of the king, "has provided me with better wine. I dislike the beer of Cambridge as much as your Lord Abbot dislikes the sermons of Master John Colet. But the wine of Glastonbury and Colet's sermons need no praise of mine."

Erasmus was quite safe in the hands of the sub-prior; for since the accession of the latter to that eminence, and through the influence of Fra Giovanni and the "Praise of Folly," this worthy dignitary had grown quite liberal in his views as to the work of Dr. John Colet, and he was almost convinced that the Church was about to pass through a reformation or a revolution.

Andreas Ammonius, who had begun life as an apostolic notary, was only a well-furnished and intelligent Italian who kept Erasmus from certain embarrassments attendant upon dwelling in the unfurnished apartments of the Augustinians when he came to London. His mind acted as a foil to the intellect of the stronger man. As secretary for the king in the Latin tongue, and a friend of the scholar, he labored, often with a zeal which went far

beyond wisdom, to bind together in common affection the Dutch scholar and the king's greatest man, Thomas Wolsey.

To the Italian mind it seemed remarkable that two such powerful spirits should, as often as they met, appear as eagerly to avoid a friendship. To each of these, however, for whom he labored in vain, it was evident that such an affection as he proposed was impossible. Wolsey was pre-eminently a man of affairs; Erasmus was a scholar. Wolsey considered Oxford as a means to an end; Erasmus looked upon every Cambridge as an end in itself. Wolsey, born of the democracy, was sure to become an aristocrat, even an autocrat. Erasmus, born an aristocrat in ability and trained to be almost an autocrat in the walks of learning, had already broken in upon the exclusion of arrogant and learned pretence with desolating power. The Renaissance with Erasmus was at first a quiver of lightnings with which he had dared to play in the vicinity of masses of inflammable material which had been gathered together in the course of long centuries in the history of State and Church. At the first instant of their appearance, Wolsey had seen that each bolt was as full of fire as of light. He was willing to use both the light and the fire, — the one to illuminate a path to the highest position; the other to burn away, if necessary, every obstacle in that path. Neither he nor the foreigner who had come into Henry's realm with so much of revolution in his words had comprehended the moral aspects which so soon portray themselves in every intellectual movement. The Chancellor was to hold back, if possible, the causes of a moral revolution; the scholar was to control, if possible, the effects sure to proceed from those causes. One was to die at last with the shadow of the throne upon his soul; the other was to die with the gigantic upheaval which he had helped to initiate, hurling his repressive conservatism into the air.

"And so you think that monastic institutions are certain to pass into decay," said the sub-prior of Glastonbury.

Vian listened with the ears of a Wycliffite.

"I should not be a monk leading a secular life, otherwise," replied Erasmus, who at that moment also reminded Ammonius, who had remarked on his dress, that long ago he had been allowed to abandon his monkish habit, and that, in obedience to the desires of the Bishop of Utrecht, he clung to the white linen scapulary which fell over the cassock and was crowned with a black hood.

Not the dress but the remark of Erasmus struck the novice forcefully. He thought of the one flogging which Abbot Richard himself had administered to him on a certain day when Giovanni was absent, and he could yet see the fiery eyes of the spiritual lord, as the latter cried out, "You will never be a good monk. The curse of Saint Benedict be upon such a Benedictine novice as are you!" — and Vian remembered also that the disappointed old man tenderly embraced him afterward, and cried, as he said, "I would release you and send you to the court of the king, if I could trust the heretics there."

Association with Erasmus at London, and his visits to him at Cambridge had made the secretary of the king somewhat of a radical. He was at least plain-spoken.

"There is surely something else in life for a man such as Vian will make, — something beside a frock and the word-mongering of unlearned priests."

The remark of Ammonius fell fruitlessly upon the ears of the sub-prior, who only stroked his ample chin and sipped the excellent wine. He was wondering what Vian and he would most likely find in that package of papers at Lutterworth. Vian was a promising scholar, and he

was aware that he himself was distressed, as he heard this elder scholar talk in his presence so freely. Surely Vian could not endure much more heresy and remain at Glastonbury. These reflections made him glad that Vian was absent from them for the nonce.

"Tell me," said Erasmus, — "for I have quite fallen in love with that novice Vian, — tell me of the youth's culture. What can Glastonbury Abbey do for such a soul as just awhile ago looked out at me through those calm eyes? Ah! I do not forget that Abbot Richard Beere intended him to be head of the abbey by and by."

The sub-prior began to reply, conscious only of the difficulties with which life's way is beset, at the moment one stops to think: "He has been a troublesome novice, Master, a high-mettled youth; and no abbot can control the seething life of his mind, as it overflows barriers the most ancient and reverend. He was once the abbot's hope; he is now the abbot's despair."

"Nothing," said Erasmus, "nothing whatever is so ancient and reverend as the human soul. Nothing is so worthy of our despair as an acquiescent youth in an abbey."

Vian had come within hearing. Every word of Erasmus made his breast lift with revolution. He was becoming sensitive to external facts and their supremacy over him. To hear what the sub-prior might say would perhaps interfere with the working out of his life's problem, by the hands which he had begun to feel must undertake it alone. It sometimes seemed as if others were living his life for him. He must leave the overhearing of that conversation at any sacrifice.

"Abbeys, great men and small men, revivals of learning, reforms, changes, — these are huge, inconceivably great or little," thought he. "They are tossing me about every whither, and it may be that through all my

life they will toss me about. But hereafter I shall at least keep my feet under me and the open sky above me."

As Erasmus spoke, Vian was listening; and as the novice recollected that episode in the abbey, it occurred to him, for the first time, that perhaps a secular life would be his good fortune by and by.

"Not a great man in scholarship or in ecclesiastics has come forth from an abbey in many years. Abbot Richard Beere coming up to Parliament with a splendid army is to-day a reminiscence of a bygone age. The Church is dealing with the length of men's beards, instead of those important changes which are forcing themselves upon her. The people will not always pay pence or listen to Mass so uncomplainingly. Ah, child, — no, a young man you are now, as I see, — I remember you on the dusty roadway. What have you read?"

"The 'Praise of Folly,'" said Vian, quietly, — "the 'Praise of Folly,' Master, and some other books."

Erasmus shrugged his shoulders, and the sub-prior was quite unnerved. He had not hitherto suspected Fra Giovanni's complete treachery to Abbot Richard Beere. The one book which Vian had been prevented from seeing, so thought Abbot Richard and the sub-prior here present, — indeed so promised Fra Giovanni, — was the "Praise of Folly," by Erasmus.

"We must hasten on," said the sub-prior, strangely connecting in his thought the book mentioned with the packet of papers at Lutterworth which at this age, by the dictate of his father's will, Vian was to receive, in addition to the Caxton and Aldine books which had been purchased for him, according to that testament. "We must hasten to Lutterworth. Our stay here has been only too long. I have come to observe the course of certain youths who are being taught here, and are under the control of our worthy abbot. I fear, Master Eras-

mus, that if Abbot Richard Beere knew that you had spoken thus before such a youth," placing his hand upon the stool upon which Vian had been sitting, and from which he had just vanished, "he would consider them worthy of safer surroundings."

"I have been made to feel that nothing is as safe as truth," thought Vian, who stood without, near the open window, and looked up into the infinite solitude of the blue sky.

A moment more and he had silently walked away, and reaching the close shade by a well-worn path, he had seated himself beneath a young elm, to find his boyhood's vision stealing over his soul.

Meanwhile the sub-prior was attempting to enlighten Erasmus concerning the short and disappointing career of Vian at Glastonbury.

"As I have said, he was almost unruly in his thoughts, and he would have avoided many pains for himself and those who loved him well, if he had kept his thoughts to himself."

"The only hope of age is that youth will not and cannot keep its thoughts to itself," suggested the scholar.

"I would not have you think of him as an ill-bred and rebellious novice," pursued the sub-prior. "On the other hand, no one could surpass him in external obedience. He outwardly took leave of every relative —"

"Except, perhaps, the ghost of that Wycliffite father."

"Yes, except that heretical father, whom he has in his very blood."

"I could see it in his dislike of monasticism," said Erasmus.

"Even Abbot Richard has had to yield before that dead man oftentimes. But the lad has bowed with reverence to the command of the master of novices, learning so rapidly, however, that he has often made him to bow unto his youth —"

"And to regard him as heretical, I doubt not, because he knew more than his teacher. That is the way of the world."

"Even so! I believe it, for I count not Vian among the young heretics, although, like myself, he reads many forbidden books. He is an industrious novice, and has never refused a mortification or a labor; oftener has he labored at studies beyond his years. Fra Giovanni has taught him Italian."

At this point Andreas Ammonius withdrew; and almost before the sub-prior had begun another sentence with Erasmus, the Latin secretary had broken in upon Vian's dream with a question spoken in Italian, and had found himself engaged with an accomplished young linguist.

"That Andreas, best of good fellows, has gone to try his Italian," said Erasmus. "Proceed; your story interests me."

"Pacing the cloisters, as one would to search for talent, no manlier novice could be found. But Vian never seems to have found happiness. If achievement in scholarship were joy, he would be most joyous. He has translated 'The King and the Monk Compared,' from Saint John Chrysostom, from Greek into Latin; and although our abbot dislikes Greek, even in the Fathers, he rejoiced at Vian's accomplishment. Three years in the abbey, and now his second in the novitiate, he knows as much as the eldest, of the higher studies. He is always hearing Abbot Richard piteously repeating the words of Saint Benedict, — words and tears mingling as he remembers Vian's Wycliffite father, — 'Let the abbot understand that to the shepherd will the fault be ascribed, if, when the father of the family comes, any of his sheep be found missing. Then only shall he be justified, if he has given all his care to an indocile and refractory flock — '"

"Oh," remarked Erasmus, with a trifle of impatience,

"I know all the rules. What of the novice? He may perish with all these rules. What else has he learned?"

"He knows the theology of the mystics and ecclesiastics and scholastics by heart. But I know your opinion of these."

"Ah! you may know my opinion. Even the world *must* know it," said the scholar, warmed into a flame, as he stood and spoke to the sub-prior as if he would lecture the theologian from Glastonbury.

At this moment Ammonius and Vian entered, but Erasmus heeded not. "I suppose," continued he, "that no such mass of useless persons ever existed. It might be better for me to pass the divines by. They are a supercilious and irritable race. If provoked, they may rush upon me in a body, armed with six hundred conclusive arguments, and force me to recant. If I refuse, they may forthwith raise the cry of heresy; for that is the thunder with which they terrify. It is true that there are none less willing to acknowledge themselves dependent on my bounty; but for all that they are deeply in my debt, as it is I who bestow upon them that self-love by which they are able to fancy themselves caught up to the third heaven, and to look down on the rest of mankind, as if they were so many sheep feeding on the ground; and indeed they pity their miserable condition, while they are themselves protected by so vast an array of magisterial definitions, conclusions, corollaries, propositions implicit and explicit, and have so many loopholes of escape, that no chains, though they should be forged on the anvil of Vulcan, can hold them so fast but they will contrive to extricate themselves; for which purpose they are provided with a number of fine distinctions with which they can cut all knots more easily than the sharpest axe, and with a vast supply of newly invented terms and words of prodigious length."

Erasmus seemed to hold his breath through this

mighty sentence. To the sub-prior it was an indictment which easily took his breath away. Ammonius looked at it as a sentence of judgment, and was transfixed. Vian's face bore a smile; but it was not the smile of silly youth, though it half irritated the sub-prior.

Erasmus talked on, until the silence wearied him. Then, perceiving that he had taken undue advantage of Abbot Richard in thus speaking in Vian's presence, he asked Ammonius to show the library to the novice.

CHAPTER XV.

A SHAKING FAITH.

> There lives more faith in honest doubt,
> Believe me, than in half the creeds.
>
> TENNYSON.

"TELL me more of the novice," said the scholar.

When the sub-prior was sure of his own tongue, he said, "Vian has mastered the decretals also; and having learned canon law, he has become, for one so young, a scholar in the civil law."

"That," said Erasmus, "has been told me by Ammonius himself. In his conversation of yesterday he found the novice ready in reply. He will tell the Lord Cardinal Wolsey of this, I am sure."

The sub-prior was startled with the fancy that perhaps at some distant day so great a man as Wolsey would require the services of Vian. Erasmus was more than willing to hear everything as to his knowledge of history and his love for politics and statecraft; and it appeared to the sub-prior that he chattered with a sort of suspicious glee, as he led the way toward the greensward near which Vian and Ammonius were standing.

Suddenly stopping, the sub-prior said, "I should feel I had wronged you, if I said not that one unfortunate hallucination besets him."

Erasmus turned, and walking with the sub-prior back

toward his lodgings, asked, "Has he ever seemed mad?"

"Not mad, Master, not even melancholic. No. But a novice must not dream of the other sex," said the sub-prior, solemnly.

"Is it more wicked in a novice than in a pope or a bishop?" inquired Erasmus.

"Ah, but such a dream he has had since his childhood. Now and then he is possessed by it."

"Would that I had kept my child-dreams!" said the great scholar.

"And I mine," added the sub-prior, as he proceeded to tell Erasmus of Vian's vision.

Silently the scholar listened; and as the moments flew by, these two men — full-grown, and partly disillusioned by cares and studies, one of whom had been officially connected with an institution which made love unholy and the marriage of souls an iniquity, the other of whom was still under the vows of a monk, and yet a profound student of human nature — abandoned themselves to the luxury of Vian's beautiful dream, took up into their own imagined experiences this sweet vision of the novice; and so they travelled hand in hand, as children grown old, wandering with the youth's glad feet over the soft grasses of Lutterworth and across its streams, sitting down on the thymy banks with Vian's little mate, hearing them utter to each other their tender vows, while the nightingale fluttered and the lark slept, beholding the innocent rapture of their hearts as they walked over the meadow orchis and the blue veronica, for very joy gathering cranesbill and white violets to strew the turf withal beneath the wide beeches, — there they lived, loveless, unloved, in a boy's dream, until tears hung like livid, fiery protests against the monkish life which denied the sacredness of such a vision.

The scheming and solitary Ammonius soon returned,

and at once, but altogether unconsciously, changed the direction which the conversation had been taking. He had found a companion in Vian, and was full of a politician's plans, to the proposal of which the sub-prior and Erasmus replied not. "No youth in England," said the secretary, "will so ably support the cardinal in his conversion of the monasteries into colleges;" and the moments passed by rapidly, as they talked about all possible careers for young men in England.

This conversation bore sufficient testimony to the feelings which possessed such minds at that hour. England, like France and Germany, had already been transformed by the Renaissance. Each seemed to foresee the changes consequent upon a finer consciousness, on the part of the common people, of their own social and intellectual importance, and a less generous estimate of the ecclesiastical aristocracy, which consciousness and estimate were to come in with this sort of reform.

Vian supposed that by this time all conversation pertaining to himself had been abandoned, and that it would be perfectly proper for him, without a word of announcement, to walk into the apartment of Queen's College which he had left so suddenly.

As he came up the well-worn walk and was about to enter the room, the laugh of Ammonius, hearty and yet hesitant, as if obstructed by an uncongenial atmosphere, broke upon his ears. Little did Vian know what the excellent sub-prior had been suffering while Erasmus had been giving a few hints of his visit to the shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham.

This dignitary from Glastonbury had found it impossible to accede, by so much as a smile, to a theory of saints and shrines which he had begun to feel was the true one. He saw that if he laughed outright, having more conscience and less intellect than Erasmus, his own soul could not occupy the standpoint of the Dutch scholar,

and most likely would go over to the Reformers. And then he was on his way to Lutterworth, the old home of John Wycliffe! And Vian, — Vian might hear him laugh.

While he struggled, Erasmus proceeded with the story, much as he has told it to the world of readers in the "Familiar Colloquies," to the infinite amusement of Ammonius within, and to the great interest of Vian, who still stood without; also to the total discomfiture of the vacillating sub-prior, who did not know where he was; who however wished he was on the road to Lutterworth with Vian.

"I was trying to be worshipful as any monk. I intended to go and pray for the triumph of the Holy League. Indeed, I was ready to hang up what I knew no monk would be likely to be able to read, — a votive offering, a Greek ode. Thinking I might not be sufficiently pious, I asked Robert Aldridge to accompany me. We arrived as the winds were sighing through the windows, and the tapers burned brightly above the shrine, which was covered with costly ornaments. There stood the greedy canon at the altar, watching for thieves with one eye and estimating the value of everybody's gift with the other. Now you know that saints never grow old, and so I was not surprised to see Saint James looking so young. He looked a little disturbed, however, — the great apostle that used to glitter with gold and jewels, now brought to the very block that he is made of, having scarce a tallow candle. The Virgin Mary, you know, being of stone, has written a letter objecting to such neglect as will expose all the saints to the danger of coming to the same pass. She puts the blame upon the Reformers, who think it a thing altogether needless to invoke saints. It has always amused me to see her stand there so unconcerned, while a pilgrim pretending to lay one gift on the altar, by some sleight of hand steals what another has laid down.

"At the north side there was a certain gate, — not of a church, don't mistake me, but of the wall that encloses the churchyard, that has a very little wicket, as in the great gates of noblemen, — that he that has a mind to get in, must first venture the breaking of his shins and afterward stoop his head too.

"But yet the verger told me that some time since, a knight on horseback having escaped out of the hands of his enemy, who followed him at the heels, got in through this wicket. The poor man at the last pinch, by a sudden turn of thought, recommended himself to the Holy Virgin that was the nearest to him. For he resolved to take sanctuary at her altar if the gate had been open, when behold, which is such a thing as was never heard of, both man and horse were on a sudden taken into the churchyard and his enemy left on the outside of it, stark mad at his disappointment.

"Toward the east," continued Erasmus, without a smile, "there is another chapel full of wonders; thither I went. Another verger received me. There we prayed a little; and there was shown us the middle joint of a man's finger. I kissed it, and asked whose relic it was. He told me it was Saint Peter's. 'What!' said I, 'the apostle?' He said it was. I then took notice of the bigness of the joint, which was large enough to be taken for that of a giant. Upon which said I, 'Peter must needs have been a very strong man.' At this, one of the company fell a laughing. I was very much vexed at it, for if he had held his tongue, the verger would have shown us all the relics. However, we pacified him pretty well, by giving him a few groats. Before this little chapel stood a house, which he told us, in the winter-time when all things were buried in snow, was brought there on a sudden from some place a great way off. Under this house were two pits, brimful, that were fed by a fountain consecrated to the Holy Virgin. The water was wonder-

ful cold, and of great virtue in curing pains in the head and stomach.

"I, observing everything very diligently, asked him how many years it was since that little house was brought thither. He said it had been there for some ages. 'But,' said I, 'methinks the walls don't seem to carry any marks of antiquity in them!' He did not much deny it. 'Nor these pillars,' said I. He did not deny but those had been set up lately; and the thing showed itself plainly. 'Then,' said I, 'that straw and the reeds, the whole thatch of it seems not to have been so long laid.' He allowed it.

"And they tell us the same stories about our Lord's cross, that is shown up and down, both publicly and privately, in so many places that if all the fragments were gathered together they would seem to be sufficient loading for a good large ship; and yet our Lord himself carried the whole cross upon his shoulders.

"I paid a pilgrimage to the shrine of Saint Thomas à Becket. My companion had read Wycliffe's books. It is one of the most religious pilgrimages in the world.

"Iron grates enclose the place called the choir, so that there 's no entrance, but so that the view is still open from one end of the church to the other. You ascend to this by a great many steps, under which there is a certain vault that opens to a passage to the north side. There they show a wooden altar consecrated to the Holy Virgin. It is a very small one, and remarkable for nothing except as a monument of antiquity, reproaching the luxury of the present times. In that place the good man is reported to have taken his last leave of the Virgin when he was at the point of death. Upon the altar is the point of the sword with which the top of the head of that good prelate was wounded, and some of his brains that were beaten out to make sure work of it. We most religiously kissed the sacred rust of this weapon, out of

love to the martyr. Leaving this place, we went down into a vault under ground; to that there belonged two showers of relics. The first thing they show you is the skull of the martyr as it was bored through: the upper part is left open to be kissed; all the rest is covered over with silver. There also is shown you a leaden plate with this inscription, 'Thomas Acrensis.' And there hang up in a great place the shirts of hair-cloth, the girdles and breeches, with which this prelate used to mortify his flesh, the very sight of which is enough to strike one with horror and to reproach the effeminacy and delicacy of our age.

"From hence we returned to the choir. On the north side they opened a private box. It is incredible what a world of bones they brought out of it, — skulls, chins, teeth, hands, fingers, whole arms; all of which we having first adored, kissed. Nor had there been any end of it, had it not been for one of my fellow-travellers, who indiscreetly interrupted the officer that was showing them all.

"He was an Englishman; his name was Master John Colet, — a man of learning and piety, as you know, but not so well affected to this part of religion as I could wish he were for the comfort of Abbot Richard Beere. He took out an arm having yet some bloody flesh upon it; he showed a reluctance to the kissing of it, and a sort of uneasiness in his countenance; and presently the officer shut up all his relics again. After this we viewed the table of the altar and the ornaments: all was very rich; you would have said Midas and Crœsus were beggars compared to them, if you had beheld the great quantities of gold and silver.

"After this we were carried to the vestry. Good Lord! what a pomp of silken vestments was there, of golden candlesticks! There we saw also Saint Thomas's pastoral staff. It looked like a reed plated over with silver; it had but little of weight and nothing of workmanship, and was no longer than up to one's girdle.

"In a certain chapel there was shown to us the whole face of the good man, set in gold and adorned with jewels; and here a certain unexpected chance had near interrupted all our felicity.

"My friend Colet lost himself here extremely. After a short prayer he says to the assistant of him that showed us the relics: 'Good father, is it true, as I have heard, that Thomas, while he lived, was very charitable to the poor?' 'Very true,' replies he; and he began to relate a great many instances of his charity. 'Then,' answered Colet, 'I don't believe that good inclination in him is changed unless it be for the better.' The officer assented. 'Then,' says he again, 'if this holy man was so liberal to the poor, when he was a poor man himself, and stood in need of charity for the support of his own body, don't you think he would take it well now when he is grown so rich and wants nothing, if some poor woman having a family of children at home ready to starve, or daughters in danger of being under a necessity to prostitute themselves for want of portions, or a husband sick in bed and destitute of all comforts, — if such a woman should ask him leave to make bold with some small portion of these vast riches for the relief of her family, taking it either as by consent, or by gift, or by way of borrowing?' The assistant making no answer to this, Colet being a warm man, 'I am fully persuaded,' says he, 'that the good man would be glad at his heart that when he is dead he could be able to relieve the necessities of the poor with his wealth.' Upon this the shower of the relics began to frown, and to pout his lips, and to look upon us as if he would have eaten us up; and I don't doubt but he would have spit in our faces and have turned us out of the church by the neck and shoulders but that we had the archbishop's recommendation.

"Again my John Colet behaved himself in none of the most obliging manners. For the gentle prior offered to

him, being an Englishman, an acquaintance, and a man of considerable authority, one of the rags for a present, thinking he had presented him with a very acceptable gift; but Colet unthankfully took it squeamishly in his fingers, and laid it down with an air of contempt, making up his mouth at it as if he would have smacked it. For it was his custom if anything came in his way that he would express his contempt to. I was both ashamed and afraid. Nevertheless the good prior, though not insensible of the affront, seemed to take no notice of it, and after he had civilly entertained us with a glass of wine, dismissed us, and we went back to London."

Poor Vian was discovered by the sub-prior, listening.

He was surely in a most pitiable condition of mind to use for the developing of his faith the air of Lutterworth, to which town the sub-prior now insisted they should go as soon as possible.

CHAPTER XVI.

AT LUTTERWORTH AGAIN.

But rich was he of holy thought and work.
He also was a learned man — a clerk.
That Christ's gospel truely would preach,
His parishens devoutly would he teach.
Benign he was, and wondrous diligent,
And in adversity full patient;
And such he was yprovèd often sithes,
Full loth were him to answer for his tithes,
But rather would he given, out of doubt,
Unto his poor parishioners about
Of his offering, and eke of his substance.
He could in little thing have suffisance.
Wide was his parish, and houses far assunder.
But he ne left nought for ne rain nor thunder.
In sickness and in mischief, to visit
The farthest in his parish, much and lit,
Upon his feet, and in his hand a staff.
This noble example to his sheep he yaf,
That first he wrought, and afterwards he taught.

CHAUCER: *Canterbury Tales.*

AS on horseback the sub-prior and Vian travelled across Northampton toward Lutterworth, the former tried in vain, for the sake of the abbot, to whom he had pledged his faith, to revive Vian's interest in the scholastic theology. But the summer-time was more eloquent to this poetic youth than either Scotus Erigena or the sentences of Peter Lombard. The sub-prior knew that scholasticism was once a most needed revival of intellectual life; and he was sure that Vian's love

of free inquiry must honor such a soul as Abelard or Thomas Aquinas. But much as he respected their fearlessness and power, he had not a thread of the scholastic in his whole spirit. Vian was a mystic.

"Scholasticism is quibbling about shadows. I prefer the blue sky and the broad green fields. I do not expect anybody to explain them. I can understand neither. I need not. They are realities to me; and I have a sense of liberty with them."

There was a snapping of chains in these sentences which did not wholly displease the sub-prior. Still he persisted in the discussion of the question as to the language probably used by the devils in hell.

It was difficult for the sub-prior to find an anchorage for his own faith in the religious feelings. He felt that something must be settled, and knowing Vian's scholarship, he sought to obtain with his knowledge a conclusion on this topic. Vian now and then would contribute a remark indicating his acquaintance with the struggles between the "Greeks and Trojans," as the literary combatants of the time were calling themselves; but his attention constantly wandered to the turf at the wayside, and the play of shadows on the stream. Through all the murky theologizing of his companion, his own ideas were entangled with the anemones and primroses as he saw them struggling together with the gorse on the side hills, and the cowslips and celandines in the valleys below.

"No Pope Leo X. dictates to the bluebells," said he; "and yet they are beautiful, — beautiful because they are free to be true to themselves and to Heaven."

The sub-prior felt that this was only another outburst of Vian's mystical thought, — so mysterious, yet so fresh and charming even to his jaded soul.

"Think of the flowers behaving as we do!" proceeded the novice impatiently, and yet with a strain of sorrow in his words. "Nay, rather; the Son of God had not said,

'Consider the lilies of the field,' if they had toiled and spun and had corded themselves with unwelcome and coarse cloth, or had fought about tassels, and had conjured up sacred patterns of painful ugliness, as we monks do."

"I told Erasmus that you had read his 'Praise of Folly,'" said the sub-prior.

"Pardon me! I myself told him that piece of news, at which he shrugged his shoulders. It appears plain to me that the mighty Erasmus fears the consequences of that humorous book. He is not as brave as he is keen and learned. Did you think I was then praising folly?"

At length they were on the bridge which in two heavy arches crossed the Swift, which, to use Fuller's oft-quoted words, "conveyed Wycliffe's remains into the Avon, as," added he, "Avon into the Severn, Severn into the narrow seas, they to the main ocean. And thus the ashes of Wycliffe are the emblem of his doctrine, which is now dispersed the world over."

The day, however, of Thomas Fuller had not yet arrived; and even the youth, now fast coming to his manhood, who was looking at that monument upon the tower of the old parish church, as it rose above the roofs immediately in front, had no thought that any such ideas as once occupied the mind of one of his ancestors should cause an open breach between him and the Church.

"Let us behold the books," said the young scholar, who had returned from the churchyard where at last his mother's dust peacefully slumbered by the side of that of his heretical father. "I would get what God may have left for me in this lonely parish of Lutterworth, and then depart. Those graves are farther apart, I trust, than their souls be now."

The young monk's face was filled with the soft bright light of the infinite daytime, as he looked up to heaven.

Old Roger Fleming, who had been a traveller in all parts of Europe, and the friend of Vian's father, had carefully made the purchases provided for in the will.

The bibliomaniac of to-day feels a lively envy at the thought of the sight which greeted Vian. Here, on vellum, was the "Vision of Piers Plowman," an exquisite manuscript, and stainless, save at the page which some one had read too often, — the page which says much of the sins of the clergy and the hope of reform.

"This," said old Roger, "was Master John Wycliffe's copy. Those," pointing to the marks upon the page, "were made by his own hand when he was master of Balliol. See! he has even placed the date on the page."

The words marked were: —

"If possessions be poison
And imperfect them make,
Good were to discharge them
For holy church sake,
And purge them of poison
Ere more peril befall."

"Ah! John Wycliffe was a prophet," said Vian to the sub-prior, who answered not.

"Here is another page which the master marked." The aged Roger turned to the lines, —

"And yet shall come a King
And confess you all
And beat you, as the Bible telleth,
For breaking of your rule,
And amend you monks and monials,
And put you to your penance,
Ad pristinum statum ire.
And barons and their bairns
Blame you and reprove."

"Not in your day or mine," said Vian to the old man, "shall these things be."

"Henry VIII. of England is a brave and thoughtful sovereign," answered the aged Lollard; his blue eyes,

which were hidden by heavy gray brows, looking out with a steady gleam of hope. He placed his finger on the Latin word *spes*, which Wycliffe had written opposite these lines; and the old man's frame shook, as he said with defiance, "Hope!"

The echo often came back to Vian, — *Hope!*

The old man hobbled away, as if he had said all that he desired to utter, and Vian and the sub-prior were left alone.

"This will never be allowed a place in the library," said the sub-prior, to whom Fra Giovanni had one day recited some of the epigrams, and who now held in his hand "Calderini (Dom) Commentorii in Martialem."

The sub-prior could no longer conceal his joy. He patted the thick small folio as tenderly as would a bibliophile of modern days, opened to its first page, and found gold and colors on the borders; admired the Roman type, and thought of the forty-two years which had elapsed since the hour when, in Venice, it first saw the light.

"How will Erasmus, if ever he should visit Glastonbury again, and if ever we get this book through the gateway, — how will Erasmus like this, think you?" and Vian carried to the sub-prior the 1477 folio edition of Lucian's "Pharsalia."

"Erasmus, you say, is the Lucian of our age," replied the sub-prior, in the midst of the surprises, as he opened to the Milanese designs which some one had added to the titlepage.

Here were copies of "Æsop's Fables," in leathern and oaken boards, printed also at Milan in 1480; the "Game And Playe of ye Chesse," which Caxton had brought out in 1474; the Aldine "Horace" of 1501, and the "Dante" of the next year, whose pages were worn with memorials of the student's interest, which manifested itself in significant lines.

"We shall be overloaded," said the sub-prior, who added, "These are priceless."

"I am the richest man in England," said Vian, with enthusiasm. "I would be the richest man if I were not a Benedictine of Glastonbury."

"But no abbot who is in his senses will allow these books within his holy precincts."

The sub-prior had just found a play of Terence, Venice, 1471; and a volume of Ovid, by Aldus, 1502; also the "Lucretius" of 1486.

"Why should Abbot Richard object to these?" asked Vian. "Lucretius was no more atheistic than some of the cardinals of the Church, and the penny-monks," — for so the Dominicans and Franciscans who in the fourteenth century wove buffooneries and poor tales into their sermons, were called. "They have used 'Gesta Romanorum' as a preacher's resource for long years. The fables in 'Gesta Romanorum' are stolen from Ovid and his like."

"And Master John Wycliffe castigated the penny-monks with his censures at Lutterworth and Oxford," said old Roger Fleming, who had hobbled back again, carrying a little oaken chest whose weight did not burden him.

"What have you there, good man?" inquired the young scholar and the sub-prior.

"The most valuable treasure which your father could give you. Good friar, I know not what you will be able to do with it in Glastonbury Abbey; but here it is. I have done my part in keeping it; God help you do your part!"

There was in the air a strange feeling that they were standing in a holy place.

The monk knew not how heavy with revolutions was that small box which had been so easily carried by the weak old man; neither did the sub-prior suspect that the

entrance of its contents into Glastonbury Abbey could make those solid walls tremble, in the eyes of the brethren, as never any most potent explosives made any city's battlements tremble under the attack of a storming foe. Ideas alone are able to dissolve rock and fortress, and yet leave them apparently untouched. Beneath the ivy which overspreads, and within the mortar which attaches the hugest stones, the potency of truth works its quiet transformations; and while men sleep within, the untroubled solidity of the most massive enclosure has become a monument or a ruin.

That box was full of the letters which John Wycliffe, scholar, saint, and heretic, had written to Vian's great-grandfather in the stormy years immediately preceding the heretic's death.

CHAPTER XVII.

A WALDENSIAN OF THE RENAISSANCE.

"Post tenebras spero Lucem."

ON the 6th of June there was joy at the house of Gaspar Perrin, who with Alke was occupying a picturesque habitation to which they had removed, from whose doorway could be heard the plash of the torrent of Angrogna, and what is now only the ruined fortress of La Torre could be seen. It was the anniversary of Alke's birth; and the friends of the industrious cottager and the admirers of his remarkable daughter came with congratulations for him and kisses for her rosy lips. The Barbé, whose ministerial duties lay in the valley which was protected by the mighty chain of mountains stretching round about, had arranged to make his annual visit to Gaspar at this time; and the very bells of the cattle mingling their sounds with the music of murmuring cascades tinkled the gladness of the holiday.

Alke had just come in from the field with a large sheaf of ripe corn in her arms. The golden beards almost outrivalled her beautiful hair in delicate splendor. The broad leaves of rich green ivy, which half hid the doorway in which she stood, vied in depth of color with her dark, entrancing eyes. A smile lit up Gaspar's face. Even the unworldly Barbé was impressed with the beauty of the picture.

"To what curious use do you mean to put the sheaf of grain?" inquired the father, who had humored every innocent whim of his child, and whose pride in her ability to create a world of beauty out of homely facts manifested itself in his manner, and made him quite oblivious of the fact that they could hardly spare from their poverty even this much of the harvest for the demands of art.

"I am going to show the Barbé how I paint the illuminations upon the parchment. He likes to see my pretty pictures; and he made me promise him, when he was last here, that I should paint for him when the corn was ripe."

From Venice the father had brought some acquaintance with the secret of staining vellum with what could scarcely be distinguished from the true Tyrian dye; and now Gaspar knew of no one quite so competent as was Alke to outshine a monk as an artist on parchment, or so able, if need be, to watch the goats in their wanderings for food. He could not forget a saying of Aldus Manutius: "There is no distance in a true life between the real and the ideal; the practical and the poetical are one." Alke had found wood upon the mountains, when her father was sick in midwinter; and recently she had been indulging the hope of keeping the two from starvation by selling secretly, through means into whose nature he would not inquire, to the monks of Turin, an elaborately painted but small manuscript, which the audacity of girlhood had undertaken.

"Ah!" said the Barbé, who in spite of much wisdom was a reflection of that bigotry so often born of anti-bigotry, "I would not have the child make pictures for monks."

"She shall be permitted to keep the skeleton of penury from her father's door, shall she not?"

The Barbé was convinced that Gaspar's strength of tone had already answered that question. Hunger still looked gaunt in the eye of the peasant.

"I should not allow her to paint such pictures as adorn Ave Marias. Nor would she be holding before her innocent eyes even the visions which such a maiden may have of saints and vigils. You answer, that she gets coin from our foes? We cannot afford to spoil even the Egyptians in this holy contest," said the preacher, who had heard that Gaspar's daughter was shrewd enough to obtain many bright coins from the priests.

"There can be no peril in Alke's tasks, for the child regards the saints as she does the personages in Homer and Virgil," answered Gaspar.

"What can she know of Homer and Virgil?" was the Barbé's instant query.

The proud father arose, went to the little shelf, and returning, handed the pious critic the Aldine "Homer" of 1504, adding: "I set the types for this volume. I have taught Alke the whole story, and she reads some Greek. As for Virgil, I may have something for you to look at some day, — something which even Erasmus longed to see."

The radiant creature who had meanwhile arranged the masses of corn and flowers so that their appearance was a piece of art, came close to her father, who held the "Homer" in his hand, put her beautiful arm about his neck, pulled his rough face to her soft lips, and kissed him.

"That is nobler than painting upon a missal; and the act itself is finer than any picture," said the Barbé, who was not yet pleased with Alke's tasks.

Alke had learned at this very early age what, if she had lived in a monastery and had found more missals to illuminate, would have been called missal-painting. Gaspar had told her of the wealth of exquisite color and worshipping affection which in other centuries monks had lavished upon the stories of saints and the life of the Saviour. He was not sufficiently puritanical to dislike

the idea of his daughter's efforts at creating beautiful things. The Renaissance had not given him any more precious substitute for a fragment of a certain breviary, which was once the possession of Alke's mother, — an heirloom of contending memories, which had come straight from the family of Count Aldani Neforzo. In an hour of tearful memory he had given it to Alke's eager girlhood. The leaves comprised only a soiled fragment; for everything which in any way perpetuated a holy fable or enshrined a breath of superstition had been torn away, in one of those other moments when Gaspar had felt himself almost a militant protester.

"As young Angelo confessed the Torso in Lorenzo's garden to be his master, so, my child, you must take these to be yours," said the proud man to his ambitious child. And then he would talk on and relate again the well-known story of Michael Angelo, which he had heard Pico della Mirandola repeat to Aldus the printer, in Venice.

There, in that little cottage to which they had removed so recently from sadder scenes, through the afternoons when others were tending the goats, sat this sad and burdened girl, surrounded with the materials for her art. As the Barbé looked over these, he found himself partially reconciled to the idea of his sheep wandering in what had appeared to him to be perilous pastures. With a saintly look upon his worn countenance, which he did not in the least affect, he followed the maiden, as she explained to him the making of a gilt ground and the laying in of a silver border.

"Whence does my child get the gilt and silver?" Gaspar saw that question asking itself upon the Barbé's lips, and he spoke it.

Alke blushed with her fresh beauty, as she thought of a certain youth whom she had met as a shepherd boy in the fields near the foot-hills.

The Barbé feared that he had exceeded the liberty

involved in the discharge of his pastoral duties in creating an atmosphere of curiosity, and he was relieved when she did not answer, but instead, pursued her way in making clear to his wondering eye the secrets of such exquisite calligraphy.

"The printing-press," said the Barbé, "will make you the last of the race of scribes and illuminators."

"It will never destroy the beauty of ornamentation by hand, I well believe. The organ has not taken any charm from the singing of a melodious voice." She answered with a song in every word which she spoke.

"'T is a large world. Perhaps there is room enough within it for everything except a monk."

This last Alke knew was directed against her furnishing to a monastery anything so desirable as illuminations. But genuine love of art, fear of want, and the idea of "spoiling the Egyptians," by obtaining money and by placing in monkish hands an illumination full of the reforming zeal and ideal, kept Alke on her feet, while this wave of pastoral opposition passed over her.

"The older writing beneath, on this sheet, is more interesting to you than the new," said he, as she showed him a palimpsest, on which the ancient Latin lines were fairly clear, lying beneath the newly inscribed lines of a homily which perpetuated the story of Saint Benedict untying by a word the cords which bound the Arian Goth, Zalla.

"Ah!" said Gaspar, who happened near for a moment, "you can see it all in that palimpsest. Old and unconquerable Rome looks out at us to-day from beneath the incredible fancies of modern ecclesiastical Rome. See the ancient uncials."

"But," said the Barbé, who had no patience with the Renaissance alone, "old Rome was pagan, and is pagan yet."

"Modern Rome — the Rome which rules now — is

superstitious. What we need in the world, first and above all else, is freedom. These visits to old Rome, by the human mind, made by way of manuscripts and monuments, make the soul feel how great and free was man before the Church had enslaved him. They lead on to the wise suspicion that the human mind might get on again, with some issue of success, without such a thing as a Pope. Europe knows now that a Christianity no better than paganism is much worse; that a Pope who is only a spiritual Cæsar cannot be so valuable to the world as a Cæsar."

"Alas!" said the Barbé, fearing, as have many since his day, the healthful rationalism which lies at the heart of all thorough reformation, and yet not sure to grasp a remedy for such fear, "old Rome will not free mankind from new Rome. A Cæsar is worse than the Pope."

"Nay," was the reply, "nay! Freedom comes by the truth. The truth shall make men free. But the discovery of so great a past beneath such a hard and intolerant present as is ours, is the truth with which to begin. It makes us free from the notion that God is confined to the days of the papacy. The reason of man is liberated, and there will be great changes."

The fresh evening air fanned the cheeks of Alke; and her bright eyes were abysmal with a mysterious glory, as she tried to disengage the Barbé from his thoughts as he stood there, his eyes resting upon two uncial letters, which she had made in imitation of those of the sixth century, when the patient calligrapher had not yet surrendered to the speedier tachygrapher with his easy minuscule. His mind, however, did not cease pursuing through endless ramifications the vitalizing idea, with the expression of which Gaspar had left him, until Alke had placed before him a richly embellished copy of the Lord's Prayer.

His eyes were two fountains of joy. "I would that

you could sell that to any monastery," he said at once. "The ignorant mumbling of syllables which they do not understand might cease, if every monk were bound to read from this parchment as he prayed."

Alke had reserved this precious leaf for her pastor; and now that he had confessed such extraordinary delight over it, she herself was overjoyed. Only one thing she desired to do. The Barbé had asked to see her at her work. Study of Virgil, and of that nature which Virgil had interpreted to her, under the all-pervading idea of the Fatherhood of God which had possessed her life, had led her to feel — what now she even attempted to realize — a desire to make others conscious of the significance of the growing corn, as a part of that revelation of the Divine Fatherhood, which, with her Greek temper, she beheld in a half-pantheistic way in the field near by.

The Barbé was soon sitting by her side; and as in deep thought he stroked the long beard which Alke knew he had suffered to grow because the priests shaved instead, the light came in over the shoulders upon which lay the sunny hair, and falling on the parchment, played with the purple background upon which were particles of burnished gold. The hand which had so often by day gathered sticks at the foot-hills, and the fingers which at eventide had pushed their loving way through the thick locks of Gaspar Perrin, seemed instinct with power and grace, as she retouched the parchment. Alke had lifted many heavy burdens, — the prominence of the wrist-bone showed the Barbé how overtasked her youth had been, — but her arm now appeared to possess all possible loveliness, as she placed her hand upon the unornamented portion of the parchment, or found the right color near it. Saucepans and bowls made a background of suggestive realism for the no less real cuttle-fish powder with which she had rubbed the manuscript, her silver-

pointed brass pencil which had been brought from Venice, plaster made ready for the ground of gold, the slab of porphyry on which she had ground her Greek green, dragon's blood, and saffron, which being covered now with water, and near at hand, were ready to be transformed into a likeness unto the sheaf of corn, which also with a red blossom stood before her.

As the Waldensian maiden, in the presence of her shepherd and friend, drew the lines and added the colors which in the form of flowers or heads of corn embellished the words "OUR FATHER," the Barbé concluded that in spite of all that he had feared of the danger to which such a rare soul was exposed, in creating beautiful pages for the eyes of the monks, he ought to say something in praise of what he saw while she abstractedly painted and sang, tone and color vying each with the other in harmony.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MAIDEN AND NOVICE.

Yet better were this mountain wilderness,
And this wild life of danger and distress, —
Watchings by night and perilous flight by day,
And meetings in the depths of earth to pray, —
Better, far better, than to kneel with them,
And pay the impious rite thy laws condemn.

BRYANT.

"THIS is at least beautiful," said the Barbé reluctantly, as he took up a piece of parchment on which the girlish hand had copied the sentence, "The trees of the field shall clap their hands." Around and within these words she had so arranged the coniferous trees that they appeared to wave with joy under the influence of the mountain winds; while below them were broad beeches, half lucent with a gentle dawn, and heavily laden chestnuts in whose branches played broken lights and shadows.

"None of the saints are to be found in my collection; but I do paint the holy apostles."

"Alas, I must say, even to you, Alke, have a care!" The Barbé repeated the injunction. "Have a care, my child, — whom I can no longer call my lamb, as I used to do, — have a care, lest in painting even them you continue the superstitions about them by your art."

"Here is the holy apostle John," said Alke, hesitantly,

as she brought forth a richly toned page from an old carven case which was a relic of other days.

"Of course you cannot sell such pictures as this to the monks. I like this picture of Saint John. He is dressed like a Barbé," remarked the Waldensian minister, with a sort of pious and bigoted glee; "he is one of us. We belong, as you know, Alke, to an early age."

"I have been taught that ours is the Church of the Apostles. I know that the Holy Church is not holy," said Alke, with a religious *naiveté* quite unappreciated by the Barbé, who was looking upon the picture.

There was something so intelligently serene and yet so passionate in the face of the apostle, that Gaspar, who had been most careful to note the physical and mental development of this precocious child, found a shadow inclining over his soul.

He was silent as he thought: "No one could have made those eyes, and put the quiver of life within those lips, without a feeling, profound and comprehensive, of what is in man's life and woman's life. Alke — my baby-girl no longer! — Alke is growing toward womanhood. The problem of life, — its fire, its frost, its terrestrial and celestial energies, — all the problem of saint and sinner has just recently opened its significance unto her. My little child has already put the history of the eating of the tree of knowledge in the face of the most blessed apostle."

Gaspar had not seen Alke's picture of Mary Magdalene, and it was perhaps well. He felt the warm tears hanging upon his eyelids; but through them, with the Barbé, he was soon looking at another picture.

The Barbé was startled. Gaspar was as serious in his thought as he was calm in his bearing. The young artist had transfixed their questions and emotions with her illumination. It was at once a commentary and a revelation. There on the piece of parchment, which bore

on the other side the fading memory of a drawing which had long ago been made to perpetuate an improbable Romish legend, the Waldensian girl had painted sober but inspiring history. It was a martyrdom, the burning of a heretic.

The fire seemed to consume the very parchment. Every color was livid with the heat. It trembled and leaped, and twisted its wrathful flames upon a rock, which was portrayed with such powerful realism as to evoke from the Barbé the exclamation: "The rock of Mentoules! the rock of Mentoules!"

Then the illumination silenced him. Arrows and javelins appeared instinct with murderous intent, as they lay within reach of the lambent flames. The face of the persecuting prior, who stood by, was a portrait of satanic hate; and the suggestion of armed bands of cruel men crowded the pictured scene with resounding footsteps. Out of the rising, living pyramid of fire looked a scorched face.

"It is Louis, Louis, my own brother!" ejaculated the Barbé. "Curses upon them that burned him! Nay, nay!" — the Barbé was looking into the soft, clear eyes of Alke, — "nay, nay! God counted my brother Louis worthy of martyrdom, and you have painted the hour — "

"The hour of coronation," said Gaspar, who saw that the Barbé was busy wiping the fast-flowing tears from his cheeks.

From that hour the minister was entirely reconciled to Alke's art; though once afterward, having been led by her to read Dante's "Purgatorio," he ventured to call her attention to the fact that of the two illuminators whom he celebrates, one of them is in the state of purgatory. He never again, however, sought to inquire how far she had wandered from his own religious opinions in making this art supply the necessities of her father's

home. If he had inquired further, he might have discovered that at that hour she was desirous to be at work finishing the manuscript, and that she had been persuaded and enabled to attempt it through the machinations of a priest who, though thirty miles away, had heard of her work.

This was the story: A brother in the monastery of Turin had, a year before, been fortunate enough to be passing through the town of La Torre, upon an errand that permitted the novice who was his companion to find a scrap of parchment which, on presentation at the sacred house of the Capuchins, proved to have been freshly colored with a dye resembling Tyrian purple. Every man in the scriptorium partook of the excitement which it roused. Could it be possible that the secret of making a dye which in the days of Charlemagne made the parchments so proper a background for golden letters, had been recovered? Who possessed the precious secret? Besides, here, upon this trifling scrap, were certain letters, placed there with almost perfect art! They composed the Lord's Prayer.

"Surely," said the priests, "it is a Waldensian's work."

"I saw a maiden of great beauty drop it in the street," was the information which the novice of Turin finally yielded to the authorities.

"The secret shall be ours," were the swiftly uttered words in reply.

Before a month had gone, this very novice, properly instructed, had been placed under the priest of La Torre, and in the clothes of a peasant's son had obeyed the priest in going forth morning after morning to the mountain-side, until he had found Alke tending the goats. With consummate care, and as the result of desirable rewards, such as appealed to this maiden's power which was thirsty for opportunities, he had found out that her

father Gaspar Perrin had once been a printer in Venice, and knew the secret of empurpling parchment, and that she often illuminated the colored material. His talk opened a new world of hope before Alke.

Very soon through this youth, who so excellently executed the schemes of these authorities, the priest of La Torre had made purchases sufficient to justify the opinion of his friends and that of the neighboring monastery of Turin that the safety of Gaspar Perrin was desirable. It was agreed that in no event should his life be imperilled until this secret should be found out; and more especially was it understood that the girl, who had been an artist even in childhood, should be drawn by every politic measure into the service of empurpling and illuminating parchments for the monastery.

"She shall be ours, — she and her secret shall be ours!" swore the priest in charge of the scriptorium.

"Oh, if only I could buy parchment!" said Alke, one day, in the hearing of this disguised novice, who had paused with a bundle of fagots at his side to speak with her. He had been taught to await the mention of that necessity.

"Would you like to make some coins by painting on some new parchment?" was the studied inquiry.

Alke's innocent eyes brightened. It had been a winter of sorrowful hunger, and Alke knew that the larder was empty. The father stood before this heroic maiden in all his gaunt and gracious weakness, as she attempted to speak.

"I could —"

It was impossible for her to keep the tears out of sight; and they meant so much more than words could mean to him, that the young Capuchin felt a strange twinge of joyous pain in his heart.

"I know where we may find a small missal, which you could make much more beautiful. It is not far

away; if you will illuminate it, you shall have many coins."

This missal had been in Alke's hands from that day; and now the last lovely picture had been completed. It lay in the oaken chest, and it was the only work of Alke which the devout Barbé did not see.

It seemed sufficient to both Alke and her father that the kindly pastor had been so easily reconciled to her art by the sight of the painting which he had just looked upon. Alke and Gaspar were able to keep a secret which was assuredly innocent enough, and which yielded such comfort in mitigating the sorrows of their poverty.

"That missal," said the happy child to her father, when he seemed sad because she worked so diligently and became so weary, — "that missal will help us to keep all the books which you brought from Venice." Then Gaspar would look proudly upon her and upon the books, to the list of which Aldus and his son had contributed additions from time to time, all of which he had been compelled to think of selling.

For the Barbé an hour of sorrowful recollection had come and gone. It had, however, quickened his sense of ministerial responsibility. His mind was full of plans for the day or night of communion. He had been compelled to fix upon the midnight hour.

"Our meeting shall occur at midnight," said he to the chief members of the fraternity, as they loved to call their simple organization, who had just come to consult with the Barbé. There was a firm tone of commanding courage in the voice, as he looked into the face of the youthful assistant with whom he always made his visitations. The members of the fraternity retired.

"Perhaps our joy on this birthday will end in mourning," ventured the young man.

"'It is better to go to the house of mourning than to

the house of feasting,' " replied the elder, as they started together toward the simple repast which in Gaspar's home made the evening meal.

Holiday that it was, and happy as the friendly neighbors had seemed throughout the day, that evening meal was itself a tender, loving communion service. It was the Waldensian eucharistic reminiscence of apostolic times.

"Benedicte, Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison, Pater noster," broke forth the rich voice of the Barbé, as they were seated at the table.

Alke's golden head was bowed; but the devil-like eyes of a monk who gazed in upon them from his place of hiding without, saw that no one made the sign of the cross, and that the room was bare of images.

"God, even our God, who provided food for His prophets and feedeth His children with manna, bless our meal and this reunion!" said the devout Gaspar; and he added, "In nominis Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti. Amen."

The cruel eyes of the stout monk who had concealed himself in the bushes near the open window, might then have beheld them making the sign of the cross, but for the fact that in his hiding-place he was trying to complete his plan for the killing of the Barbé, for whose noble heart he had a poisoned dagger.

There was but one topic at the table of this militant Waldensian, and Gaspar was loquacious.

"It is the same with us as it was with our ancestors,— the same foe, the same fight. We — God be thanked! — are surer of our ground. The Pope still pretends himself to be more than man, and only less than God Himself. Men believe it only where they cannot read God's Word; for the Scriptures say not that the Pope should rule over men and kingdoms. Only one is master, and that is Jesus Christ. So long as the priest anoints

the king, the Church will be tyrannical and full of abomination. The Church neglects her righteous duties in not blessing the souls of men, and becomes corrupt in the attempt to control nations. Ours it is to oppose by life and doctrine, not the right, but the wrong which the priests smile upon and bless."

"There is nothing right in the Church. The Church is beyond remedy. Priestcraft is wholly evil. The monasteries are the hiding-places of iniquity," urged the more radical and dogmatic Barbé, who detected in Gaspar a feeling of tolerance toward the monks of Turin which he could not allow to go uncorrected.

"There are yet some benefits which may come to us," said Gaspar, "even from the monasteries. They have kept the manuscripts of other days, and have often been the only hope of learning."

"They are not now," said the Barbé, with earnestness. "Learning such as yours has come into the world in spite of monkish opposition, not by the help of abbeys and bishops. Besides, religion is greater than learning. I would rejoice to see yonder monastery in flames."

The concealed monk without gnashed his teeth in his rage. Gaspar within hesitated to speak, because he was not quite sure but that the Virgil manuscript which Erasmus sought at Turin had come to La Torre. He could not think of the walls of a scriptorium in flames. The thought of the manuscript kept him silent.

The monk outside had made a favorable construction of Gaspar's silence, and had found himself restless at eavesdropping when he considered the heresies of the Barbé. "Surely," thought he, "the father of the girl is not heretical." And into the shade he ran until he had found the leader of his fellow-conspirators, whom he persuaded to spare Gaspar's cottage, which they had planned to burn over the Barbé's head.

Scarcely, however, had the monk left the bushes near

the window, when Gaspar explained the true reason for his interest in the monastic institutions in that vicinity. He told the Barbé of the visit of Erasmus; and forthwith, as he remembered Erasmus sympathizing with him when he had spoken of the loss of his boy, he surpassed all that the good pastor had said in his expressions of violent heresy.

"They count us more dangerous than Saracens; and the cruelty which they show in the murdering of loyal men is more malignant than that with which they kill Turks. Never were there such base, bloodthirsty knaves as the Dominicans; nothing is so holy to a Capuchin as a massacre. And yet — and yet I shall have that manuscript of Virgil."

This he said, feeling that his orthodox hatred of priestly crime was always likely to seem to be waning at the remembrance of Aldus and that manuscript in the scriptorium.

"My brother may lose his soul in trifling for a fragment of ancient and corrupt Rome," said the Barbé, solemnly.

"I shall never lose it to the modern and more corrupt Rome," was the answer.

"No, Gaspar; you have been true. Your household knows all the story. You are honestly trying to be a Waldensian and an Erasmian."

"Never!" cried out Gaspar. "Erasmus is afraid. Am I?" and the scarred wrists, which bore their awful testimony, were immediately thrust before the Barbé's eyes. "I fear nothing, but being untrue to God and the holy Scriptures."

"The holy Scriptures say, 'Seek first the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added.' You shall get the manuscript for the cause of learning, when the cause of religion shall have conquered and prostrated the walls of these monasteries in the dust. The kingdom of God on earth will bring every other righteous sov-

ereignty along with it. It will not come as Erasmus thinks — "

"How?" interjected Gaspar.

"Not under the wing of the kingdom of culture," replied the Barbé. "It will come in its own triumph; and it will turn and overturn all else, until, with its establishment, these kingdoms of freedom and culture shall be safely builded in its majestic shadow."

"I told Erasmus as much," said the charmed Gaspar, as he saw the eloquent lips of the Barbé pause.

"The contest is upon us. May God make us strong! The world is not able to use a manuscript of Virgil worthily, until it has read without a tremor the manuscript of Saint Paul the Apostle. To accomplish this means the overthrow of the kingdom of darkness by the kingdom of light. Jesus Christ, not Virgil, is the Light of the world. All genuine kingdoms are comprehended under the kingdom of Christ the Lord."

As the Barbé with shining face turned toward Alke, the red glow of evening shone upon his gray dress; and the maiden's eyes were restless enough in that expectant air, as she thought of the days immediately to come, and reflected that if one of them proved true to her hope, before the Barbé should leave their affrighted community, she herself, according to the word of the young peasant shepherd, would have in her own hands the manuscript of Virgil.

"It is an outrageous law which would prevent us from meeting together and discussing the Catholic faith," said Gaspar. "How gladly do the spies of Rome run to the confessors and inform their prelates of our conferences! Doubtless at this hour you are watched."

"I escaped a band of monks near the opening of the valley. Brutal faces had they, yet not so brutal as the faces of some who made the doctrines which we cannot obey!" answered the Barbé.

"Brutes rule us!" said Gaspar; "and however worthy the children of heretics may be, they may not hold office until the second generation be passed. Our homes are kept pure, and prayers arise continually from households which may be demolished at any time for sheltering a heretic. Even if I know a heretic, — a man who insists upon the right to his own soul, — and if I do not report my criminal knowledge to the authorities, it is likely to mean banishment for me. And yet I trust God —"

"And so does Alke?"

The fair face smiled; and eyes which looked fearlessly toward heaven made sufficient answer to the Barbé.

As they arose from the table, about which such lightning-like forces had been playing, the first word which escaped the lips of the Barbé was, "Peace!" and in tones of musical praise there followed the words of the Revelation: "Glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honor, power, and might be to our God forever and ever."

No monkish embellishment could have added beauty or dignity to the appearance of this simple man of God when he prayed: "May God reward with plenitude and bless with abundance those who have been our blessing and joy; and having fed our bodies, may God feed our souls. May God be our companion, and may we be with Him through eternity."

Gaspar and Alke said, "Amen."

There they stood for a moment in silence, the Barbé holding aloft the hands of Alke and her father, which were joined to his, while he whispered another prayer.

CHAPTER XIX.

HOLY COMMUNION.

Hear, Father, hear Thy faint, afflicted flock
Cry to thee from the desert and the rock;
While those who seek to slay thy children, hold
Blasphemous worship under roofs of gold;
And the broad, goodly lands with pleasant airs
That nurse the grape and wave the grain, are theirs.

BRYANT.

FOR two hours before midnight the disguised monk, who had left his priestly habit in the convent of La Torre, was listening to the sounds of muffled voices which proceeded from a point far up the side of one of the mountains which guard the approaches of the valley of Angrogna. Since noontide he had been toiling upward, seeking the opening to the cavern in which the papal party rightly surmised that the Waldensians held their meetings, wondering meanwhile at the fierce courage of a rebellious fanaticism which could lead men, women, and children to a spot, as yet undiscovered by him, in which they could bid defiance to bishops and armies. He was now assured that the sounds which had floated to him within the last two hours came from a height immediately above him; and he had abundant reason for the suspicion that the mountaineers were gathering loose stones, placing them near the mouth of

the cavern, from which, at any moment desired, they might hurl them upon their foes below.

Religious persecution has, in all ages, made most curious alliances. Certain well-known architectural remains have been aptly described as "half church of God, half fortress 'gainst the Scot." To this class of memorials would have belonged that altar-like creation which, under the hands of two of the most stalwart of the Waldensians, — Claude Rodan and Hyppolite Meane, — was rising at one end of the huge cave.

Troubled as was the exploring monk below them to find a path to that opening which the mountaineers had been entering and re-entering for two hours and more, these men had marked its way from the adjoining mountain, so that, approaching it from above, any one of the Waldensians, who understood the language of the rocks placed in position on the route, should not lose it by a footstep.

The mountaineers now waited at the opening of the cave for their companions. The last stone had been carried within; and there, inside a smaller but high-arched enclosure within the expansive cavern, it stood, — a communion-table, which in an instant could be transformed into an armory of weapons such as no ordinary band of Dominicans or Capuchins could withstand, as these missiles should be thrown to the roadway below. This latter fact the concealed monk of Turin had known never so well as a few minutes before, when a single rock, not larger than his own head, had slipped from the grasp of one of these mountaineers above him, and sped like a fateful thunderbolt, carrying dust and broken fragments of dead branches with it into the gorge beneath.

"Heresy has a most frightful energy," said his muttering lips; and he wished himself back in the Capuchin monastery.

By eleven o'clock that night, the path along which the

bouquetin walked with steady but careful step, had become a highway for men and women, young and old, who from Angrogna, Brackcrastro, Lucerna, and even Bobbio beyond the Pelice, trod on, with hearts beating with emotions of worship and valor, toward that communion. The guiding wisdom of properly placed rocks on the way had saved them from the abysses.

"Never did a conquering host come back from a field, carrying the weapons of their enemies, with more heroic joy than is yours even now," said Gaspar Perrin to an old man, who sat by the pathway upon which he had fallen from exhaustion. Alke, whose tenderness had already begun its ministry in wiping the blood from his forehead, which had been lacerated as he staggered against the sharp stones, sat with the aged man for a moment, and listened as he described the difficulty with which he had made this much of his pilgrimage to the new shrine. Her luxuriant hair was like a rich morning, falling often upon the white head of the old man as she listened to his whispers. He seemed to feel, as he smiled his gratitude, that the sun had indeed gone down with him, and only the silver moonlight of life, bright however as that moonlight which now illuminated the scene, was left.

"Oh, you are Gaspar Perrin's daughter! You are the angel of the dawn," he said, when, in unwonted brilliance, the moon irradiated the edges of the cloud and burst forth again to glorify them both. And then he arose, and as if supported by an enthusiasm of which her young eyes were fountains, he trudged noiselessly on. He was an aged Barbé, who had come, as he believed, to take his last communion.

One by one, they entered the place of worship. An opening in the rocks far up on the side of the smaller chamber allowed entrance between its mighty edges for a rift of light. Omnipotence had pierced the hard

brown texture of the mountain; and through the slight aperture glowed the weird and solemn light. At first the radiance faltered upon the rocky edges of the altar-table. Then the moon's softest beams lit up, with a rapturous and majestic glory, the symbols of the broken body and outpoured blood of the Redeemer. Every ray seemed to quiver with instinctive and divine sympathy, as it touched the bread and wine. Every crumb of the bread was a radiance. The ruby drops of wine gleamed with a living splendor. Even Gaspar, who had generations of truest rationalists in his blood, found himself looking upon the scene with an awed soul. Before him stood many of the neighboring mountaineers, each unconsciously making the sign of the cross.

"I have beheld the Host elevated within the walls of St. Mark's," whispered Gaspar, "and I have felt the sublime calm of worshipful emotions, as I gazed upon the high altar; but never have I beheld such — "

"Never before," said the resolute and affectionate Alke, "have you beheld God himself touching the sacramental emblems with His own pencil."

Gaspar's strong hand found the warmer hand of the maiden, to whom every revelation of the good had become also a revelation of the beautiful and the true; and he was sorry on the instant, when he found that he had said rather peremptorily, "Hush, my child!"

But he could not break her spell. From that moment Alke was an object of peculiar reverence and affection to all the Waldensians. Even the regidor — the elder of the two Barbés who travelled together was called the "regidor;" the younger, "coadjutor" — quoted her saying in the sermon which followed. When the aged man whom we have seen with his scarred forehead smitten with the moonlight, and trudging on by Alke's side toward the cavern, heard her speak, he only averred once more, "She is the angel of the dawn!" Very soon

the Waldensian mothers who had carried thither their little ones, had crowded about her as she stood outside in the faint firelight, looking dreamily toward heaven. Each mother was silent, that she might hear what else Alke should say which would seem like a revelation. But Alke only kissed the little ones.

"May God preserve them in His abundant love!" said she, as she carefully folded something from which she had been reading in the moonlight, — something which the simple-hearted wives of the mountaineers declared did tremble and shine as did the emblems of the sacrament, — and she went into the cavern again. For these who lingered without, meditating on Alke's words, she prayed.

Alke had become deeply conscious that she was living in a superstitious age, and that even she must not become a stone of stumbling unto those who often had felt, as they turned aside from the elaborate ceremonial and impressive worship taught by the Roman Church, a barrenness of belief and vacancy of faith which it was sometimes hard to reconcile with the richness and sublimity of truth. Alke prayed devoutly for them. She knew that she possessed an awful charm for their awakened religiousness. She and her words in that cavern had at once suggested and outshone the picturesqueness of the Church of Rome. Some even whispered that she looked as the Virgin must have looked at the hour of the annunciation.

The regidor had begun to speak.

In a low and impressive voice he said: "We are here as the children of a Father whose are earth and heaven. But our Father's earth is held by the enemies of a true faith; and our foes are so strong that we may not worship as God has directed in the Scriptures. We are denied even the open sky for a pure faith. We have been driven here by the recollection of cruel swords which have gleamed through many years. Our fathers

before us toiled up these steeps, and crawled with careful labor down these fissures, not because they were not God's children, but because they were truly such, and sought to worship Him in spirit and in truth. We have this night placed our feet in their old path. It led them unto Him; it will lead us also. No rich windows filled with monkish fables invite this light which falls upon this table of our Lord. It comes through an air unvexed by man's fancies. God Himself touches these emblems with a divine pencil. He has provided His poor children with tapers for the altar which were lit beyond the stars. We have no cathedral save this which God builded. Our defence is the munitions of rocks. No long trains of priests and choristers animate this scene; but the angels of God, who are silent, encamp about them who love Him. Our song of triumph will break forth when that silence which evil and pretentious things cannot endure, shall have swallowed up those who confound God's people."

The coadjutor arose and stood by his side in the pale brilliance. Almost as by inspiration, a voice full of religious fervor and tender with the consciousness of memories awakened by the emblems upon the stony altar, exhaled a breath, sweet and all-pervasive, — a breath of sacred melody. Fear may have at first compelled all others to remain silent. The Barbé was mute; and soon a look of approval added beauty to his sad and worn face. The voice, which had once grown hesitant on feeling its loneliness, now gathered strength and richness, as still more solemnly and tenderly it filled every heart with rapture, and with a deliberate grandeur continued its praises within the echoing vault, until the old mountain's heart must have grown warm with the melody.

The voice at length ceased its ministry. The tones which fell at the last from Alke's lips seemed prayers. Every one found within his bosom a Christ, to whom

alone sins were confessed. Even the Barbé's blue eyes were tearful; and Alke, when with almost entire self-forgetfulness she had sung the entire canticle of Simeon, covered her face as she prayed.

So profound an impression had the song made, so did its heart-searching strains lift the soul of each above the praises or curses of men into the very presence of God, that the Barbé, always anxious wisely to substitute for the rejected confessional of man's invention something more divine, stretched forth his hands, and only interpreting what was occurring in many breasts, said, —

"Confession to us, confession even to the most worthy of men, can only be blessed of God, when in private conversation age and good character give their admonition and comfort to the soul. I beg all of you even now to confess. Confess ye to the Lord Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep; and let no one be mediator, in such a moment as this, save the great High Priest who hath entered into the Holy of Holies!"

At that instant, when silence was teaching every one how much more stable was that confidence in God which their unuttered confessions expressed than any confidence in man could be, a veritable son of Anak, strong, stalwart, and untamable as all believed him to be up to this moment, with tears flowing down his dust-covered cheeks and losing themselves in the thick, unkempt locks of his coarse, long beard, staggered forward, and looking like a huge ghost in silvery radiance which hung before the communion table, cried out, as he gazed into the face of the regidor, —

"I have wronged you! 'T is you, also, I have wronged. God has forgiven me; will you also forgive?"

The face of the regidor was a bright benediction when he said, "In the name of Christ, all is forgiven; I have nought against you."

"Ah!" said Gaspar Perrin, who had comprehended

the whole scene, "this is a judgment day at midnight. God's throne is set up in a cave. Surely" — his eyes were fixed upon the emblems — "the crucified Lamb of God shall judge the earth."

The truth as to the circumstance was this. A year before, this same Catalan Boursuer had been found in a quarrel with a fellow Waldensian, involving the possession of a harvest. In all such matters the Barbé usually nominated arbitrators, thus hastening for truth's sake the settlement of all disputes. Most basely had that muscular mountaineer insisted, when the arbitrament was held against him, that the Barbé had purposely appointed enemies. With a poisoned tongue, which sort of tongue is never so venomous as after it has learned pious phraseology, had Catalan Boursuer slandered the just and altogether unsuspicious Barbé. Now, and before that communion-table, his Lord and Master had judged Catalan. Alke's delicious song; Catalan's rough figure stumbling through the dark and falling before that brilliance as he uttered a half-sobbing prayer, — surely this was the gate of heaven to their waiting souls!

In all these circumstances and events there had been little to remind any one who had ever worshipped at the altars of the Roman Church, of the ceremonies of Catholicism. In the haste of the next few moments, which was caused by an alarm from without, a contrast was instituted between the celebration of the communion — if we must use so protestant a phrase — as the regidor conducted it, and the more ancient and churchly spectacle. Such a contrast, indeed, it was as to prophesy the simplicity of coming days.

Two incidents will serve to show the condition of the Waldensian mind, which at a later date, on matters theological and liturgical, was in some incidental regards as easily satisfied with the opinions and practices of the Reformers as they had previously been with the ancient

forms. Alke was only one of many in that band in whose blood ran a Romish culture. Only now and then had Gaspar detected in her mental or spiritual life an intimation that Count Aldani Neforzo was her grandsire.

That night as she sat by his side, gazing upon the moonlit bread and wine, she was thinking of the Transfiguration of her Lord which she had dared to attempt placing in illumination on parchment.

The hours were passing swiftly. The regidor took up the service with a solemn joy. No cardinal in robes of office could have seemed more sublime. Instead of muttering the words of the Mass, which they had begun to abhor, there came from every lip the softly repeated Lord's Prayer, — as simple as yonder baby's cry, more sublime than those mountain heights round about. Every one had bowed upon the cold floor of the huge cavern; and instead of "Ave Maria," came again, in rich diapason, their simple canticles, shaking again the stone sides with an echo of love divine.

Still did Alke view, with an increasing and wondering interest, the glow of light upon the unleavened bread and the wine whose every drop trembled with that melody. Gaspar saw her agitation. The girl for a moment looked the similitude of her dead mother; but only as the wife of Gaspar's heart looked one night in Venice when her protesting zeal left her for a little time and she cried for the Eucharist. Could it be that Alke was slipping from him?

He tried to look a subduing calm into her restless eyes. But no; she was reflecting: "The Barbé has allowed me to sing; yes, he has allowed it."

A more brilliant streak of moonlight played upon the bread and wine.

Alke spoke. Nay; it was not speech: it was a chant, a rapture, a sort of divinely governed rhapsody. Yet every Waldensian recognized the words as they came

from those inspired lips, as did the song of Miriam at the seaside. They comprehended the story of the Transfiguration of the Lord. Every ear was attentive. A hush as of death held the infant quiet in its mother's arms; and the silence communicated a sacred afflatus to every soul, as each stood still with fixed eye beholding the bread and wine which were now glowing with the silvery fire, and Alke repeated the words: "And his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light."

Had Alke beheld the glory of transfiguring power, in the transformation of the wine and bread into the blood and body of the Redeemer?

For a single moment did this holy interruption disconcert the regidor; and then he turned the incident, by his very silence, into the energy possessed by the spiritual atmosphere with which each was surrounded, if not inspired. By his side was the youthful coadjutor, who was bewildered. He appeared ignorant of what to expect next in this strangely confused but obviously divinely arranged service.

At length the regidor offered the broken bread to the coadjutor, then lifted a fragment to his own lips. Then the wine was taken by each, amid the silent glow. The men and women arose. Every soul became a communicant; every heart confessed obedience to the captain of his salvation. One by one they passed in front of the regidor and coadjutor, — one of these repeating the words: "This bread is broken for the communion of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ which we now take;" the other saying, "This cup of blessing which is now consecrated is the communion of the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ."

At length Alke came alone unto the table of her Lord. Every one stood with hushed reverence, as she approached the sacred spot. There and then had the men who looked upon her vowed to defend their faith. There

widows, who remembered on that night the fathers of their orphaned children, had given new pledges to their God. There old age had sipped the nectar of eternal youth, as in those bits of unleavened bread and in those drops of wine was revealed a living cause.

What had Alke to bring?

Once again did she seem to Gaspar to possess the temper and attitude of a Neforzo. Within each of us the passion of forgotten ancestry arises and asserts its feeble existence, at these critical junctures in our own lives, where in the lives of others and at other times it was easily supreme. Surely Count Aldani Neforzo, the father of Alke's mother, whose dust Gaspar buried in Venice, had often beheld at moments such as this, when the oblation of Christ appeared to consecrate all acts and hopes, that impressive scene in the life of some copyist or illuminator, when, seeking the salvation of his own soul through good works, the weary artist who had lovingly copied a homily or embellished a gospel, would crowd close to the high altar, and strain to obtain a sight of the elevated host, as he begged the Holy Mother to receive the long-ripening fruit of his genius and labor.

Whatever force of ancestry was behind her, Alke stopped suddenly before the regidor, and looking only at the bread and wine, on which still trembled the pale splendor which came like a flood through the aperture above her head, bowed herself; flung back the sunny waves which fell over her breast as she uttered a brief prayer; pushed her hand within her dress until it felt her own heart beat, and reaching the parchment, which we saw her folding up as she stood without the cavern peering into the skies, she held the richly illuminated Lord's Prayer before the eyes of the two Barbés and before the sacred emblems. With untrembling grasp she kept it suspended in that streaming flame of whitest light. The hand which had created it out of purple and gold and

silver and dragon's blood, each tint of which now shone as never before, was baptized in splendor from above. In silence she partook of the bread of the communion. The wine was near her lips, when a shout from without penetrated the cavern.

The Barbés lifted the bread and the wine and the parchment from the altar-table. The shout of alarm was repeated.

"An enemy has been seen by the watchman! An enemy!!"

Every eye discerned the crisis. Every Waldensian discovered a missile in each rock which had helped to constitute the altar-table of the Lord. Down into the darkness of the pines, which was broken into by the same moonlight which had illuminated the emblems and the parchment, Alke hurled the first stone.

In an hour the communing church had become the church militant; the altar-table had been thrown, stone after stone, into the gorge below. At the bottom there lay the body of a disguised Capuchin, whose brutal face was scarred by the rock which had killed him; and the worshippers who had been made sure of an attack from above were hurrying to outrun the dawn, as they fled homeward.

CHAPTER XX.

MARIGNANO.

C'est mon fils glorieux et triomphant César. — LOUISE OF SAVOY.

TO those observant and thoughtful Frenchmen who honored the memory of their late sovereign Louis XII., the coronation of Francis I. in the Cathedral of Rheims appeared to be an invitation to every romantic and adventurous young man to join a standard which had been blessed on that occasion by Robert de Lenoncourt, Archbishop of Paris, and instantly made an object of adoration by all the feudatories and vassals who shared with the army a dislike of the English alliance, and the poets and courtiers whose ardor saw before them a path of glory. Not the least enthusiastic of those whose youth now saw an end of the inglorious schemes which so honored the opinions of Henry VIII., was the knight Ami. Especially was he gratified at the fact that Chancellor Duprat, for whom he felt as active a dislike as he had for the English sovereign, had not succeeded in defeating the intention of Francis I., of making the Duke of Bourbon Constable of France.

Throughout all the jousts and tourneys, processions and banquets, the faithful eye of Ami, never blinded by the beauty of the handsome king, saw two things ahead, — the first, the effect of the idea within the

mind of Francis I. of entering Italy to recapture the Duchy of Milan; the second, a rapidly swelling debt which such pomp and plans were creating, and which had nothing to appeal to save an exhausted treasury and an already overtaxed people.

"I can never forget the labor and sufferings of the peasant at Chilly," said he one day to the king, when his Majesty laughed at his own royal extravagance.

"Well," replied the amused monarch, "we will re-create Charlemagne's palace here, and greater than Arthur's knights shall rule at our court. The women shall be goddesses, if need be, though some of them are frail!"

Ami was not encouraged, when he was allowed to hear the plans of Louise of Savoy and Chancellor Duprat. "Every objection on the part of the populace will give way before the reappearance of royal power," said Duprat. "We have hitherto asked the English to make France respectable in her own eyes. We will now create self-respect. Our Parliament will pay for a magnificent success; they will refuse to pay for a dull and commonplace throne, which is neither a success nor a failure."

To all this, Louise of Savoy, whom the king had created Duchesse, whose revenues had been exhausted and to whom the palace of Amboise had been given, assented, while she protested against the bestowment of the title of "Constable" on Bourbon.

One day, Nouvisset — a gossip who never gossiped unwisely — made Ami acquainted with the peculiarly interesting facts which bound Marguerite, the king's sister, to the Duke of Bourbon, and repulsed the haughty mother from so proud a courtier. Why was he made Constable?

"I know," said the young man, "that it was done to please the gracious Madame Marguerite."

"Yes!" said Nouvisset, "neither Duprat nor his Majesty's mother loves Bourbon as a constable."

"I discern in the king himself a disposition to underrate Constable Bourbon."

"You are innocent of what you ought to know. I will tell you. The king's disposition to quarrel with so strong a man began to show itself at Amboise. It is only another love-affair, — indeed, everything is love here. Politics is the art of getting into love and getting out again. Statesmanship is the art of keeping out altogether, Ami!"

"Let me have the story," begged the impatient knight.

"It is this. When he was plain Charles de Montpensier, the man who is now constable fell in love. You would not think such a stiff, proud, chilly person could melt with passion. But he loved the daughter of our new duchesse, — he loved even Marguerite. Young Duke Francis used to go about Amboise with Gouffier, calling his sister 'Pearl beyond price;' and under the lilacs young Montpensier — think of it! — Duc de Bourbon was making love to her who is now *Madame!* Oh, *tempora mutant,* Ami! Excited by Gouffier, who also was mad with love for her, Francis, who never liked Montpensier as he did the other young nobles, Gouffier and Vaudenesse, challenged him. The combat was prevented, and Charles de Montpensier left the court and the heart-broken Marguerite." Nouvisset hesitated, and then added: "All this while Madame Louise — *Duchesse!* — was in love with Vaudenesse, who threw off his gray and green and wore the colors of Madame d'Angoulême — *Duchesse!* It was now the chance of M. de Gie, who also loved her — oh, France is a vast love-affair, Ami! — it was now his chance to rid Amboise of M. de Vaudenesse, which he easily did after the night in which the young noble was found in the gallery."

"What about the king's mother, Louise of Savoy?" asked Ami, intently.

"The *Duchesse!* Yes; she was compensated. *She* always *will* be, mark me, Ami!" The eyes of Nouvisset twinkled like bright, happy stars. "It must always be remembered in your calculations that the Duc de Bourbon loved the 'Pearl beyond price.'"

Ami had another fact at hand for future use, when by the side of Bourbon Constable stood Odet de Foix, Sire de Lautrec, who had now been made ruler of Guienne, and Bonnivet, who was now Admiral of the Fleet.

Duprat he distrusted and hated; Bourbon's ability had captivated him; Bonnivet — formerly plain Gouffier who had already instigated Francis I. to attack Bourbon, who was never able to allow that wound made in the friendship between the king and the duke to be healed — seemed to Ami to be a jealous, self-asserting, inefficient man. How easily jealousy in another finds the toes of our own!

"The pretence!" said Ami confidentially to Nouvisset, when they came together at a later hour at the queen's reception, and beheld Bonnivet's pallor, when the latter saw the blush upon the face of Marguerite as the magnificent Bourbon approached her, — "the pretence! I should smite him if I were the duke."

"The duke's thought is upon some one more important to him than even the Admiral Bonnivet, Ami. Mark the regret on the face of Marguerite, our beautiful Duchesse d'Alençon," whispered Nouvisset. "Look at that selfish passion in her mother's eye; see the eye of the Duchesse d'Angoulême. Ah! Ami, there is another love-story in all this. *Madame d'Angoulême loves her daughter's lover, Bourbon!*"

Ami was at that juncture more nearly convinced than ever that statesmanship in France, at least at that hour, was the art of keeping out of love altogether. He felt a twinge of shame that he himself had ever felt deeply about the beautiful sister of the king.

The whole court was there. It was the hour in the annals of the French soldiery which could boast of men known as Chevalier Bayard and Constable Duc de Bourbon. The battle-field of Marignano was just ahead, and the ardent spirits of France were shouting, when the Duchesse d'Alençon — his sighing, regretful Marguerite de Valois of other days — caught sight of the brilliant commander, her Duc de Bourbon, whose plume of white and crimson feathers came close to the window where stood the unhappy woman and her husband, known in French history as Duc d'Alençon.

Ami turned from them at once when he saw Marguerite's eyes visit the silvered sash and begemmed poniard of the constable with a shuddering look of pride, and the inferior personage at her side with a smile of pity. The young knight's eye paused for an instant upon the glittering casque of Bourbon, and the flushed cheek of his jealous rival, Bonnivet; then, with the rest of the king's suite, he was himself lost for a moment amid the velvet and gold, until he was startled to hear the King Francis I. say, —

"Too magnificent is our constable. But, Ami, the Duchy of Milan shall be ours, — *mine!*"

The emphasis was on the word "mine." The proud Francis was himself rankling with envy; but yet he knew that he must use Bourbon and be patient.

"And," said he to Ami, to whom by this time he sought to explain everything, "I have assented to the suggestion of the Chancellor Duprat to multiply the judicial offices which may be for sale."

At once the king saw that a better statesmanship than his was offended.

"Frown not upon his Majesty! It is done. Parliament must learn that the most chivalrous army which ever crossed the Alps shall be supported."

Too young as yet in his relations to Francis I. as his

king, to oppose vigorously, and just sufficiently youthful to partake of the excited hope that the throne of his royal friend might become the greatest in Europe, Ami was silent, while Louise of Savoy was made Queen Regent, and the army whose vanguard was now under command of Bourbon was made ready to set out for Italy.

Close to the sovereign rode Ami, whose figure and whose wise handling of his delicate responsibilities had much of the elegance of Bourbon, but more of the grace of Bayard, who, as Lieutenant-General of Dauphiny, also rode near the king.

"It is probable," Nouvisset had said to Ami, as they parted, "that this may be a victory for you. Let our king triumph while he may. Some day, believe me," and the eyes of the lame knight, who hobbled by Ami's side, gleamed with prophecy, "the burghers will some day rise against feudal nobles and their kings; then the triumph will be theirs."

"Our king does not consult with England. France is her own mistress now," cried old Trivulcio the censor, as he learned that both Wolsey and Henry VIII. were indignant at Francis I., and at his contemptuous neglect of them in this expedition.

Ami looked about when they left Lyons on that day of July, 1515, and he saw forty thousand men with trains of artillery; but it was he alone who began to worry the king with questions as to the difficulty in crossing the Alps. The king answered by calling his attention to the allies and their strength. There was Octavian Fregoso, doge of Genoa; but Ami had found out that he and D'Alviano, general of the Venetians, knew nothing whatever of the problem. News came that Cardinal Sion was rousing the Swiss to a pitch of crusading fury against the conquest. Twenty thousand Swiss under Colonna were guarding the passes. Between Mont Cenis and

Mont Genevre were soldiers awaiting the opportunity to overwhelm horsemen and ordnance. Ami could not be silent, though Louise of Savoy had called him "a troublesome youth." Only Chevalier Bayard was wise enough, amid the enthusiasm of the advancing host, to listen to Ami's suggestion that they find out from the shepherds of the Alps the unknown passes.

"Susa is guarded and is impassable," said he.

Oh, if this Waldensian had at that hour foreseen the future, how carefully he might have studied those roadways which threaded the mountain fastnesses, for he was not far from his old home!

The August snows were melting, and they had come upon the brown rocks which were beginning to grow insurmountable, when Ami with a vassal of the Comte de Moretto, a cousin of Bayard, went forth from the rest to find a shepherd.

"You look like the Piedmontese," said the chamois-hunter, with whom the disguised Ami soon found himself in interesting conversation. There was an all-pervading silence about the young knight, as he thought of his babyhood, and then, jealous again of his own self-consciousness, put the thought aside forever.

The route to the plain was at length accurately described by the shepherd. Ami's brain was a map, in which Lautrec and Navarro found all needed information, when, by order of the Council, they set out to survey the pass. The king embraced Ami, and Bayard blessed him, when they returned and reported the task of crossing by way of the Guillestre ledge entirely practicable.

"The astrologer said it!" remarked Francis I. to Bayard, as Bourbon led on the vanguard toward the ford, and detachments were sent to hold the attention of the foe at Mont Cenis and Mont Genevre.

But the supreme trial was now coming to Ami.

Even the king grew haughty and cold, and Bonnivet

was disdainful and insulting, as the army, after reaching the most perilous ravines, found itself crawling along, hand over hand, through difficulties unimagined, dragging the heavy artillery up the rugged slopes of the mountains.

"Your astrologer, Sire, ought to be made to carry a horse over this abyss," said the wrathful admiral, addressing his Majesty, as he looked with contempt upon Ami.

Bayard alone kept silent, while the king swore, and Talmond and Imbercourt reiterated the oaths of Bonnivet, whom at length the Constable Bourbon silenced, while the steep declivities confronted them from the other side. Levelling roads through flinty rock; closely holding to one another, as they rounded a projecting cliff; bridging abysses and crossing torrents, they beheld horse after horse tumble into the depths below, until at length Ami's name, for five days an epithet of scorn, was the one name which the knightly Bayard spoke lovingly to the king's marshal, De Chabannes. At length they discovered themselves safe in the territory of the Marquis de Saluzzo, with the Alps behind them.

"Prosper Colonna!" said the invincible Ami, who had made another discovery, "the arrogant Colonna!" Ami pointed toward Villa Franca, where Colonna, the Pope's commander, was dining.

Bayard and Imbercourt at once dashed on, with French chivalry behind them, to carry the unwelcome news to this hostile warrior, that his confederates must meet an army and a king which had already put the Alps between them and retreat.

Soon a sword was in Bayard's hand, and Andalusian horses, with jewels and plate, were possessed by the soldiers.

September 13 came. Cardinal Sion's furious audiences were now surging before the Cathedral at Milan, — an army filled with the hope of joining forces with Naples. No eloquence, however, could hurl back the French ad-

vance. Negotiations and parleys had failed. The eloquent cardinal at last shouted, —

"Seize your spears; sound your drums!"

It was three o'clock. Dust and heat surrounded the advanced guard of the French. Ami, who had scouted the plain, and was now dripping with water, with which he was drenched in the canals which he had swum, crowded into the presence of Bourbon, announced the enemy, and springing into his armor was soon with the constable in the presence of the king.

"Oh, Ami," said his Majesty, "the astrologer said it!"

"The Swiss are coming, Sire!" was Ami's reply, when the king sprang into his saddle and flew toward the enemy with his body-guard.

It was Ami's first battle. Enthroned upon the king's heart, as never before, he felt himself a sovereign. True, as he believed himself to have been, to the higher statesmanship to which he was as yet sure his sovereign would soon assent, the conflict seemed his own. Attached to Bourbon, and indignant at the jealousy of Bonnivet, he was in rapture when he saw the golden pommel of the constable's sword lifted high above the dust-cloud by that strong hand. Ever remembering Nouvisset, and not forgetful that Louise of Savoy had regarded himself a failure as a page, he thirsted for another opportunity for the exhibition of wisdom or valor. Already hostile to this particular plan of Leo X. and proud of his sovereign, he had pledged every drop of his blood to his king's desire, — the recovery of the Duchy of Milan.

It seemed only a brief, agonizing hour to the young knight.

The bareheaded Swiss, unshod and furious, leaped at once against the cooler intrepidity of France, which was now throbbing with the heart of youth. Ami could not but admire them, as the heavy guns discharged their shot and fire against the immovable mountaineers. Lanz-

knechts by ranks fell back into the ditch to die before the courageous Swiss. Four guns fell into their hands, while Ami hurried to the constable to tell him that the German allies had feared treachery and were therefore wavering.

"Only the king may rally them," said the commander. "They must see the King of France."

Francis I., with Ami at his side, now rushed forward with these soldiers who had fought under the black banner of their own king. Ami gave to the tired king, who was fighting on foot, his unbroken pike, for the fragment to which his Majesty still held.

"I could give you my heart," said the knight.

"The astrologer said it!" cried the king, tears in his throat, as he saw how the lanzknechts now rallied, and the Swiss faltered at the sight.

Unafraid of the mountain chivalry, the mountaineers beat back the tired horses of the French. Through the top of the king's helmet was driven a murderous pike. The French were roused again. Back the enemy fell, until Swiss determination paused in the hope of acknowledged victory.

"Now," shouted Ami, as if he had assumed command of the king, — "now for our gendarmes to charge them!"

Francis I., on the instant, made the charge; and the four thousand foes cried, "France! France!" as they surrendered.

Night had come; it was all confusion and death. Both armies were misled by the soldiers of either side, bearing, as they both did, the white cross. Even the king, but for Ami's cry, "It is the foe, the foe!" would have been captured, as he started on horseback into a wilderness of hostile pikes.

Under the moonlight, within an area of groans and sighing, the faithful young knight was soon watching over

the king, while he sat awake, when the *cornets de vache* of the Swiss sounded, and the French trumpets pealed forth, or while he slept a little on a gun-carriage, assured that Bayard had returned, after his adventure, to the French lines.

The Constable Bourbon was a silent throne of power.

"Put out the lights!" whispered Ami, when in the entangled condition of the armies he descried a Swiss battalion resting perilously near the king. The matches were relighted but once in the long hours which followed.

"Water!" said his Majesty, — "a drink for a thirsty king, Ami!"

Ami produced a helmet; and the king was soon presented with a draught, which he refused to take when in the flickering light he saw that it was red with blood.

Morning flamed her ruddy signals for both armies. The ditch gave the French an advantage valuable beyond estimate. But backward again fell the lanzknechts; twenty thousand were in disorder; the Swiss broke into the quarters of Bourbon.

The critical moment had come. Now the French poured forth volleys of flame into the breasts of the foe. Attacked from the rear, the Duc d'Alençon routed them; stormed at in front, the wall of infantry began to falter.

"D'Alviano! D'Alviano!" shouted Ami to his king, who needed but the assurance that his Venetian ally was coming, to increase his own valor.

Inch by inch, before Bourbon and his vanguard, who were roused by the sight of the king fighting midst dust and heat, — fighting as a true knight, — did the Swiss army yield. Man by man did they fall before the Gascon cross-bowmen, until Trivulcio cried, "It is a battle of giants; I have seen only battles of pygmies hitherto;" and looking about on a field on which lay six thousand dead and dying Frenchmen and fourteen thousand

mountaineers, — a field from which the hitherto invincible Swiss were scattering, — Ami said, as he approached the king, —

"Sire, it is your triumph! It is no longer a battle, but a victory."

"Ami," answered his Majesty, "the astrologer said it!"

Before an hour had gone, that well-known message had been sent from the royal son to his proud mother, Louise of Savoy, containing every evidence of the mingled flippancy, arrogance, and nobility of the king's character.

Before night had come Bayard had knighted Francis I. on the battle-field of Marignano; and as soon as the most alert policy could dictate it, Leo X. had despatched a nuncio, who carried an invitation to the conqueror, which was destined to be answered by the appearance of the French King before his Holiness at Bologna.

CHAPTER XXI.

POPE, KING, AND KNIGHT.

Godiamoci il papato, poichè Dio ci l' ha dato! — LEO X.

DECEMBER 8 had come; and pausing near Bologna, the victor of Marignano saw before him the members of the Sacred College, who had advanced just beyond the gate of San Felice to meet him. He had entered Milan, October 16, and his route from that hour had been that of an acknowledged conqueror.

What a pathway of thorns had Ami travelled, in his conversations with the king!

Proud of his sovereign, and zealous for the success of his reign, the pupil of Nouvisset, who had already listened to the enkindling words of the reformer Lefevre, was made painfully aware that Francis I. had no comprehension whatever of the subtle influence which had been the impulse of the Renaissance and was now to become the soul of the Reformation. Of course, Ami still believed in what were known as the regularly constituted authorities. He had not entertained an idea of such a transformation in the Church as would affect the existence of the papacy, or even the righteous policies of his Holiness. Something, however, he was sure must be done so to purify the institution that it should become more worthy to exercise over men's minds the authority which it so loudly professed. In the dust and heat of Marignano,

the king had apparently lost every sympathy with such a change as had formerly received his faltering praise.

Indeed, as they neared the confines of the Pope's territory, the brilliancy of the victory behind him and the fascinating splendor of the Sovereign Pontiff, whom he was about to meet, appeared so to bewilder his dreamy and luxurious mind, that it was impossible for Ami to get a hearing for the serious interests of his country and time.

"Again you are gloomy, — you who came to be my happiness? Is not Marignano enough for you? Well, then, I will show you a pope who will never again enter into an Italian league against me, — a pope, Ami, who beats us all in festivals and in playing the Ciceronian. Come, good cheer, as the English say! Ami, good cheer!"

The king was in his happiest mood, and his overflowing joy echoed with laughter which died away in smiles upon the faces of the barons, who, close behind the Chancellor Duprat, rode proudly toward the place where they were to meet the humiliated but wary Pope.

When Duprat's attention was a little diverted, Ami ventured to ask, "Sire, why did his Holiness prefer Bologna to Rome itself?"

"'Ubi papa, ubi Roma,'" answered the king; and then, as if he himself were not quite satisfied with this somewhat ineffective saw, he added, "His Holiness knew it to be too much to ask of a victorious king that he should endure a journey to Rome, Ami!"

"Sire, your minister believes that?"

"He does," said Francis I., looking swiftly back upon the golden-vestured attendants; "but, Ami, *you* do not believe it."

"Your Majesty," said Ami, with grave affectionateness, — "your Majesty would not keep himself unaware that

Pope Leo X. fears that you may desire to enter Naples; and Rome is a long way toward Naples."

Pope Leo X. had prevented any display of French power in Rome.

Then was Francis I. enraged at his Holiness and at Duprat, — at the one, because of his shrewdness in making a proposition which had led him toward Bologna; at the other, because of his stupid advice, which had led the French monarch to accept that proposition.

"Do you know that Leo X. really fears me?" eagerly asked the king, as he remembered that Duprat, the servant, and Louise, his mother, were so warmly attached to the Church that they were constantly overestimating popes and underestimating everything else.

"I only know of the conversation which occurred between the Venetian, Marino Giorgi, and the Pope," dryly answered Ami.

"Let me hear it again!" demanded the dignity of the sovereign.

Ami proceeded, much as the historians do, to relate what had been a common report at Viterbo, that the Venetian ambassador at Rome, before the battle had taken place, seeing that Leo X. was deeply interested in the success of the Swiss arms, dared to remark to his Holiness, "The Most Christian King has a warlike and well-caparisoned army; the Swiss are not mounted or well appointed;" and that to this the pontiff replied by protesting that the Swiss were quite intrepid; to which the Venetian made the rejoinder, "Were it not better for them to illustrate their valor in fighting against your common foe, — the infidel Turk?"

Francis I. broke into Ami's story with the question: "But what said the Pope after the battle was fought? What said he about my triumph?"

"Well," continued the knight, "everybody in Rome knew that the victory was yours, Sire, when Marino stalked

to the Holy Father with such demonstrations. He even made the chamberlain wake his Holiness out of sleep, after which awakening, the Pope, who was but half dressed as they say, heard the unwelcome truth; and he said with evident fear, 'What will be the result?'"

"What did the Venetian tell him?" quickly inquired the king.

"This: that Venice all the while was with the Most Christian King, and that their Holy Father could not suffer at the hands of such a son of the Church."

"And the Pope?"

"He answered very gloomily, but, Sire, as I think, very craftily; for he said, 'We will see; we will place ourselves in his hands and sue for his love.'"

"Then," said Francis I., with great hauteur, — "then, Ami, we will be generous. None so gracefully as a victor may be truly magnanimous."

"Alas, Sire! even you cannot afford to forget that his Holiness is a shrewd politician, and that your chancellor leans strongly toward the Church."

Ami was already acquainted with his king; and this outburst of proffered magnanimity which he had just heard did not surprise him. There was just one element lacking in it all, which Ami's character, under such unstrained circumstances, was sure to miss, — the element which always must be present to redeem magnanimity from being only indolent indifference, — and that was conscience.

The king was growing restive under Ami's words; and yet he was not content to abridge the freedom which the young knight used. Unpleasant information from this source had often proved most valuable. Ami could not forget that before the Pope had entered into the Italian alliance, no less a scholar than the already eminent William Budé, with whom we shall become more familiar at a later date, had been sent by Francis I. to his Holiness,

bearing many offers of profitable marriages and alluring pledges to be made good if the Holy Father would be so minded as not to oppose the king's invasion of Italy.

"You, my sovereign, had confidence in the ability and learning of the excellent Budé," remarked Ami.

"Budé is one of your scholars," was the brief saying of the king.

"An ornament of *your* kingdom, Sire, and a man of the reforming party. He is with Lefevre, Berquin, and Farel."

"He is an innocent man of learning," said Francis I., who now saw that the knight was anxious to impress his king with his own opinion of the Pope's wariness and skill. "He is too pious for an ambassador, Ami."

"And the pontiff was too much a master of intrigue for his simple honesty," added the knight. "Think you that the Holy Father knew that Budé's learning had probably led him to consort with the men of reform?"

"Learning? What reform?" brusquely answered Francis. "His Holiness, as you shall see, is more learned than Berquin, Budé, and Lefevre taken together. The papacy and the kingdom of France fear nothing."

Again Ami was amazed at the growing conceit of his king, and at the disposition within him to listen with amiableness to the stipulations of Rome. All notions of counting in the reforming movement among the forces or problems of his time seemed to have fled from the royal brain.

"Ami, you have a cloud upon your soul."

"None upon my conscience, your Majesty," was the swiftly spoken answer of the young knight.

"Oh, that is knightly enough!" laughed the king; and he proceeded to say, "You would have me attend to the vaporings of my enemies, would you, Ami?"

The knight straightened in his saddle. The thirty cardinals who had already been in sight for some min-

utes, were now advancing toward the king. The time was short, but Ami must speak. "I doubt not," said he, "but that I have unduly annoyed my king. I doubt not but that Leo X., our Holy Father, is a scholar and a mighty patron of artists, musicians, and poets. But, Sire, your kingdom has been strong in the love of your people. The next age — it seems not far away — will not be so favorable to feudatories and nobles, kings and popes. We have seen the Swiss burghers beaten back; but the ideas which are rife everywhere will rally the peoples, even the peasants, and the kings will suffer. The Church rests in the power of the Pope; it ought to rest in the religious life of all. The kingdom rests in the greatness of the king and in the subtlety of his chancellor; it ought to rest in the love of the people for a just government."

"Ah, then, you would have me abolish the sale of judicial offices?"

"Certainly," replied the youthful statesman. "It is an expediency without principle, Sire. The parliament of the people will ultimately abolish a parliament of twenty councillors, whose places were bought from the crown."

"We could not have had Marignano but for that expedient of the Chancellor Duprat," said the king, curtly.

"Ah! but what of the next Marignano?" Ami's eyes looked with a serene unconsciousness in the direction of Pavia. But Francis I. had seen the Pavia of 1515 throw open its gates with shoutings.

What of the Pavia of 1525? Francis I. was no prophet. He recked not.

Every such outburst of unimprisonable truthfulness costs the human soul a peril. Every act of moral heroism or of mental foresight brings a recoil. Ami was very young, — too young, as it instantly seemed to him, to be lecturing even so youthful a king, — too young as yet to have these notions firmly set together in a creed, much

less in a political faith. He had only come to that hour of political transcendentalism which luxuriates in proclamations. If such a soul keeps his conscience, it is almost certain that he will come to be a most valuable kind of utilitarian. The very youth which was genius, was exposed to all the incursions upon imagination and hope by the spectacular, which those faculties of youth so constantly invite; and Leo X. and his magnificence were sure, at Ami's age, to make an impression overwhelming, if only fleeting, which only the meditation, to which happily he was addicted, and the better associations at the capital to which he was privileged, could by and by test, shatter, or even obliterate.

They were in Bologna. The words of Lefevre, whom Ami had heard so often, as he compared the simplicity and piety of Saint Peter with the luxuriousness and ambition of his successor, Leo X., faded out of the mind of the imaginative young knight, when the two cardinal bishops, who at an earlier hour had supported Francis I. as he entered the cathedral, now delicately directed the conversation in which the Holy Father took such a conspicuous part, toward classical themes, and stimulated his Holiness to eloquent remark on canon law, painting, and music. Ami, with the chancellor and barons, had previously yielded to their emotions of joy in tears, as the king, whom Bayard had rightly called "the handsomest ruler in the world," attired in blue velvet, stood where the light from out of the Italian heavens fell upon the embroidered fleurs-de-lis, every window crowded with admiring faces, every voice shouting, while cannonading echoed from the hills. But now nothing could tell of his limitless delight, as his sovereign, less magnificently clothed, but more regal in manifestations of intellectual power, pursued the pontiff with intelligent questions as to Erasmus of Rotterdam, the restoration of Greek and

Latin, the printed books of Aldus Manutius, — especially the "Plato," which had been dedicated to his Holiness, — and, above all, certain manuscripts which awaited recovery in the Orient.

It was a golden hour for Ami, for he had himself trained his sovereign on the very phrases which caught the ear of the Pope, and the opinions which fascinated his attention.

While others of the king's attendants were remembering how, but a few hours before, his Majesty had held up the train of the Pope's robe as he neared the altar; or how, at a later moment in the ceremonies, the supreme Pontiff had washed and wiped his hands with the aid of water and napkins presented by the king, Ami's joy was supreme over the fact that the two rulers had spoken together of the Royal College, at whose head Francis desired to place the illustrious Erasmus, and the other fact that the Holy Father had conceived a plan which had just been intrusted to Raphael, which involved nothing less than the reproduction in the form of a gigantic model of Rome at the hour of her grandeur. Indeed, the Pope had so fascinated the young knight with his learning and elegance, and so delighted was Ami that Leonardo da Vinci had consented to proceed to France with the return of the king, that he did not think of a single objection to the alliance into which Francis I. had entered.

At length the interview concluded.

The Pragmatic Sanction of 1438 was displaced by a Concordat. Henceforward the king should be less dependent upon ecclesiastical power in his own affairs; the Pope, on the other hand, became possessed of the wealth of the Church, and was therefore, in his own way, less dependent upon the king.

On the hand of Ami, the young knight, shone a gleaming emerald. Leo X. had showered gifts of all sorts upon the king's favorites.

"It is for scholarship and courage," said the pontiff.

"For scholarship and courage," was the phrase in Ami's ears, when again he entered the palace of the king, and was rejoiced at being in France again.

Duprat's despotism at the French capital was growing more pronounced. Popular hatred had begun to direct itself against him and Louise of Savoy. Both of these were irritated beyond measure when it became evident to them that the young sovereign had grown arrogant and headstrong, even in spite of the chancellor who suffered most from the self-sufficiency of the king.

Louise of Savoy, who never despaired of controlling her son, knew now of but one avenue of approach by which she might certainly gain the king's heart. She was his mother, but she was anxious to be his sovereign; and confidently measuring the strength and quality of his purpose to extend the number of the ladies at the court by adding the beautiful wife of Jean de Laval de Montmorency, Seigneur de Chateaubriand, she resolved to carry the scheme to success.

One night at Amboise a note was intrusted to Ami by the king, to be carried to a jewel-worker and goldsmith. That note contained a ring, with instructions that another precisely like it should be made at once. On his return to the castle, Ami was aware that two rings were in the packet; and soon he was assured that one of them had been secretly placed, where the day before it had been found, in the room of the Seigneur de Chateaubriand.

Faithful to his king, yet blinded from the infamous secret, Ami, a few days afterward, saw at court the beautiful Françoise de Foix, now the wife of Seigneur de Chateaubriand; and he overheard a chagrined and outraged husband upbraid her with the words, —

"I never sent the ring. Oh, sweet lamb, in the cave of wolves! I never sent that ring to you!"

CHAPTER XXII.

UNRENEWED FRANCE.

God will renew the world, my dear William; and you will see it.
Lefevre to Farel, 1515.

BEFORE Mme. de Chateaubriand had fairly inaugurated herself as the favorite of Francis I., even Louise of Savoy, who had, as we have seen, favored the alliance for her own reasons, was disturbed by the remarks which flew into the windows of Chambord as birds of ill omen. Disdainful as she was of the authority of simple goodness, the face of the wronged husband of the lovely François de Foix followed her, — a fact which she might have put away from her mind had it not been that this man, who was now known as Comte de Châteaubriand, had in a moment of gloom told his sorrows to certain of the men of the reforming party, who at a certain critical juncture had refused to forsake their king, although he had tried their loyalty to the extreme. Louise of Savoy and Duprat were confident that, with the complications which now harassed the throne of Francis I., he could not afford to lose the advice and labors of these worthy persons, who preserved a warm affection for their queen Claude, and had centred in their sovereign a still greater hope for a better system of domestic government in France.

"They make much ado about morals," said the offended Louise to Duprat; "and the worry is that

our daughter, even Marguerite, has given them her sympathy."

This was a double-edged complaint which she was fond of employing to lacerate into activity the mind of the chancellor.

"Certain it is," said one of the reforming party to Nouvisset, "that even the King of France cannot hold in hand the band of men who are attacking the lives of the monks, so long as our sovereign himself indulges in royal iniquities. The Chateaubriand affair is a disgrace to us all."

At length Mme. de Chateaubriand herself was called upon to offer any suggestion she might have to make to the determined Louise, as to how this intrigue into which Francis I. had gone heart and soul, might be made a little more palatable to the French public.

"I have it," said she, one day, as in the distance upon the velvet green which ran down by terraces to the river she descried Ami practising with Francesco at swords, — "I have it; my plan will work."

"Let me hear it at once," insisted Louise of Savoy, as she drew near, her small, bright eyes sparkling with a proud interest in the old scheme, of which this new one was a suddenly extemporized part, calculated to bolster up what had not quite failed, but seemed tottering.

Mme. de Chateaubriand's breast yielded a sigh of relief. She was, nevertheless, very nervous. Her beautiful hand grasped tightly the blossom of heliotrope, which was soon entirely crushed. She placed her elegantly slippered foot upon the rich carpet with spirit, and taking the shameless mother of the king close within a tapestried corner, out of whose shadows gleamed the flames from her own hot cheeks, she said, —

"Ami, the young knight, who has troubled you so much with his dreaminess in statecraft and in morals, may be made to serve us. Every one of that brainless

company who ape Farel and Lefevre, and quote Erasmus, is fond of Ami, believes in him, thinks he can do nothing improper, certainly nothing wrong. We purchase our indulgences of the Holy Church; and thus we aid the Holy Father to fight the Turk or to finish St. Peter's. Ami, — why, he gets his, if he needs any, by flattering the opposition. He is flesh and blood like others; they believe he can do nothing impolitic or wicked."

"Well, what of that?" inquired the impatient Louise.

"This, let me tell you. Ami is, as I have said, human, like other men. He has an affectionate heart, and —"

"Yes, I know he has a violent current of love within him, for he has been foolish about the Duchesse d'Alençon, our Marguerite."

"The offensive pretence!" hissed the Comtesse de Chateaubriand.

"The conceited young scoundrel!" added Marguerite's mother, with spite.

"As I was saying," pursued Mme. de Chateaubriand, "the man is very tender and susceptible. He admires a beautiful and intelligent woman. Set a flame going in such a breast as his, and it will communicate itself until it burns away every obstacle. It will at least take care of itself. He is bound to take care of the consequences."

"I do not yet understand you," interjected the excited and perplexed Louise.

"You shall, gracious madame! I know, and so do you know, that if Ami were in love, he would soon find himself where he would have a new set of opinions about what concerns us."

"I see, ah, I see!" and the bright, small eyes of the king's mother were aglow in the stern face.

"If Ami were entirely wound up with an affair of the heart, he would appreciate the circumstances of others.

He can never withstand beauty and intellect; and I long for the day when he shall be under the sway of love."

"Ah, truly!" was the happy sigh of Louise.

"I have this in mind. In my old home" — there was something in the throat of the beautiful Mme. de Chateaubriand when she said "home," something which she swallowed with difficulty — "I left a sweet and coy little companion, a sister by adoption; and there is in this court none so warm or exquisitely lovely in her feeling and form as she. Oh, I have often said to my heart, when Ami's manliness touched it, 'How I wish Astrée could but look upon you, you splendid fellow!' She has all the gifts which love could offer to the most exacting lover. Delicious girl is she — and so full of light! She loves books also; and if the blundering priest to whom I confessed last, is not already making a mess out of her faith in the Holy Church, she will pour through those dark eyes of hers a flood of radiance upon our affairs."

"You mean," said the serious Louise, who always demanded definiteness, "that if she were here, she is so beautiful and so scholarly —"

"No, not *too* scholarly," interrupted the amiable favorite; "beautiful and winning, so lovable —"

"That Ami would surely love her? How do you know that she would love him?" said the crafty associate of Duprat.

"Know it? Who could help it? I almost love Ami for myself."

"I think him a detestable prude," avowed Louise; "but that has no significance. Then, let me understand; if these critical moralists of France who adore Ami, saw Ami in love also, — and you could bring that about, so that it would take the tongue out of his mouth, — if things went ill they would find in him such a champion of the king and court as would silence them. Ah,

yes! I see, I see. Can you bring this girl to our palace? Astrée, — did you say her name was Astrée? What a beautiful name! *Star* of destiny! Can you get her into our court?"

"She will gladly come; ay, she longed for the court months ago. If that confessor — "

Louise of Savoy heard only the first sentence of this reply, and was satisfied, nay, delighted, as she averred, adding, as she concluded the interview, —

"I shall tell the Duchesse d'Alençon; but she must never know all of this plan of ours. I will tell her that a beautiful young woman is coming, and that it is fitter by far that hereafter Ami should be seen with her than with the king's sister. Our Marguerite must rid herself of Ami's confidences; this will be her chance."

In the twilight Francis I. was walking with Lautrec, the brother of Mme. de Chateaubriand; and while Clement Marot, the poet, was making verses for the favorite of Francis I. and his sister Marguerite, they discussed affairs of state. Days had come and gone, while Parliament had stood stubbornly eying the Concordat, and the wily Duprat was confiding to the syndics of the Sorbonne his purposes as to the suppression of the heresies of Lefevre and Farel, but especially those of Louis Berquin.

"The Pope is an elegant pagan. The king found that out when he met him at Bologna. He cares for little save his music and manuscripts. But for that testy and spoiled Ami — he was made a knight without due order or consideration — the Holy Father would have won his Majesty to become a crusader against the Turk. The crusade must be against the heretics in France," said Duprat, as he left Amboise to go to Parliament.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE WHITE PEAK AMID DARK CLOUDS.

"Where huge Taurus, with his brow
High heaved above the clouds, eternally
Keeps watch upon the sun, uplifting thought
Beyond the sensual and the sublunary,
The darkness and the storm, and stir of earth
To the unchanging peacefulness of heaven."

"LEFEVRE! The name is associated with prayer and confessions. I cannot think where I saw or heard or dreamed it. Oh, I do remember!"

The eyelashes of bewitching beauty fell; the delicate hands were lifted to her cheeks; the graceful arms held up a head of black, glossy hair; and she was silent until, with a self-mastering change of attitude, she sat more nearly upright, when caresses of light and warmth came upon her calm face, while she was saying, —

"I heard the confessor, to whom I went at the last with my heartbreak at leaving home, — I heard him speak the name Lefevre. He called him 'beloved,' and he told me to listen to Lefevre's wisdom. But the sorrows of departing from my home overthrew the recollection, and I have heard no one at this court speak of him until this moment."

"No, they are not likely to talk much of such a fearless saint as he. He is too likely to trouble them about

the matter of duties, morals, and the like," said the young man, who sat with her under the reddened trellis at the end of a long vista of olives, whose verdure did not entirely hide a marvellous perspective, into which they both were gazing with dreaming eyes.

They were Ami and Astrée, — together alone for the first time. Only two months had passed since Louise of Savoy and Mme. de Chateaubriand had hit upon a scheme for hiding a questionable affection beneath the attachment which each was sure would spring up between these souls. And now Francis I., who more than ever had need to desire it, was congratulating the royal favorite, as they sipped their wine, that things were going well.

Alone together, after what an experience of agony and distrust! What wonder was it that as soon as possible Ami had hurried their talk to Lefevre, saint and hero! What marvel that as soon as Astrée recalled associations of faith and purity in its connection, she felt it to be a tower of defence; and she lifted her womanly eyes to find benedictions in the eyes of him who had spoken it.

A fortnight before, Astrée, duly attended, had arrived in the capital, and had at once been made a welcome guest at the palace. Soon she was persuaded to become one of the court of the Queen Claude. Astrée's memory of the woman known at court as Mme. de Chateaubriand was not so pleasant as it would have been had the latter never reminded Astrée, in those other days when her charms seemed annoying, that she was only an *adopted* member of the household. Indeed, Astrée was as entirely surprised at the graceful recognition given to her now by the comtesse, as she had been by the affectionate message which the former had answered by appearing at court. Little did Astrée dream of the terrible exigency which had made such a letter easy for the comtesse to write!

Something distasteful the solitary and thoughtful girl knew was in the air of the court before she had breathed it for a day. The Comte de Chateaubriand, — where was he at moments when the luxuriant beauty of his wife exhaled its fragrant balm in the presence of the king? Queen Claude, — where was she in the hours in which Astrée found herself with the young knight Ami, accompanied, as they had been, under the pale lilacs and across the soft lawns by the sovereign and the comtesse?

These queries came up to her thought like ragged rocks out of the midst of a magical lake, breaking up and distorting the beautiful sheen. They grew still more threatening when Astrée recalled to mind the words of the confessor at home, who she noticed hardly listened to the words she spoke to him, so pure and true did he believe her to be; who however, instead, told her with loving seriousness of the evils of the world and the temptations of the French capital.

"Would that his Majesty were a more serious man!" he had said sadly to Astrée, as he bade her farewell.

Still more had Astrée's nervousness increased, when she was gravely told by the Comtesse de Chateaubriand that she must take the world much as she found it; that she could not be her adviser in many things, owing to her relations to the court, and that she knew of no one who would be so likely to befriend her as the young knight Ami.

What could Astrée do in such a moment as she was sure must come?

That night the soft coverings which hid the costly woods from which the rich furnishings of Astrée's room had been made, were torn away, and everything was as ugly and hard as iron. The brilliant candelabra grew dull; and she even condemned the nightingale for his presence without, when his song floated through the cypress-trees and vineyards into her window, bringing with

it fresh fragrances and a thousand excuses for the hot tears which gushed forth as she threw back the cloud of black hair about her and cried for home.

"Something about this gorgeous place is so false, so false! I seem to be stepping nearer to a plank which will give way, or about to gather a flower which will poison me. Everything seems false, — everything?" and she looked out into the moonlight, which wove a splendor around her form, as it panted sleeplessly upon the furs which had been thrown over her couch. "Everything seems false here — except the knight Ami."

Astrée had said it at last, and with the saying of it there came a reflection that something solid remained to her in this transforming life; and with that reflection she went to sleep, to wake in the morning half ashamed, yet not altogether troubled, because she had gone to sleep the night before, her lips moving with the name of a young knight whom she had seen but for a day.

That one day, however, was invested with many of the profoundest meanings of eternity. It lay in the souls of both Ami and Astrée like an awful cloud-bank over a parched desert. Lightnings and thunders might be hidden within it; perhaps only sweet rains. It was a dreadful menace of doom, or it was the very breast of the Infinite Love. Neither knew which of these that day would turn out to be; both of them had looked back to it, however, and confessed its resistless charm.

Louise of Savoy, Mme. de Chateaubriand, Francis I., perhaps even the Duchesse d'Alençon, who now understood the design of the three, could have saved these two souls the scorching fire which at first breathed indignation and then revenge, — a fire which they put within hours otherwise sure to have been the gladdest hours of their lives. But they could not have saved these innocent souls and yet have operated their plan. A base love, by whomsoever abetted, is cruel above all things.

No complete chronicle can be made of that day, because no record can be made of such a thrill of joy as Ami felt when he saw this modest and yet surprisingly beautiful young woman outshine the exquisite Marguerite, whose intellectual hospitality had invited her to the largest liberty, in talking of the men of the reform and the poet Clement Marot. Ami had not been present at the first, when the conversation began, and so found himself at once in the presence of a creature of such brightness and dash, at once so modest and so skilful, that he forgot to notice the loveliness which enwrapped her as she spoke. He had, however, noticed the look of utter disconsolateness which overspread the sallow features of the king's mother as this engaging woman, whom he now knew as a guest of the queen, — who was always unaccountably absent, — sat pronouncing the names of those men in France whose influence Duprat was vainly seeking to abolish. Even the Comtesse de Chateaubriand did not quite excel, as usual, in piquancy and delightful remark, as she searched for the glances of the king.

Soon, however, the gracious Duchesse d'Alençon had allowed Ami and Astrée the privilege of the balcony upon which they had been sitting, from which the other members of the royal party had retired. In the glad recognition which the knight made of such charms, associated with a more than womanly regard for literature and reformers, he was unaware of his being alone with her. Even when the pale shadows became longer, he was utterly unconscious of any stranger feeling than that of having met a most lovely woman with whom he seemed always on the point of being at ease, with whom he constantly found himself in painful embarrassment.

Oh, if he could have known that she also was sure that a poison hung in the air, he had grasped her and borne her away!

There appeared to be enough within sight to talk about, but the air was unpropitious. A brother of hers he had seen dying, — dead, at Marignano. Her tears would have been jewels upon her womanhood had not a foul breath, which somehow stole in from some unseen corner, dried them upon her eyes, while they tried to talk. That awful silence which thrusts itself in like a sword when young souls are innocently feeling for one another in the darkness and yet are not alone, came between them; and the light which came again to their faces, as they found another agreeable topic, was hot like the breath of a sirocco. Each was sure, at length, that an awful doubt possessed the other; and in such an air the pain of departure is keener than that which comes with remaining and with bearing it all bravely. Something so mechanical haunted them, as they still sat alone.

In the limpid light which fell upon her slender arm and white shoulders, and through the persuasive airs which came through the myrtle and cypress trees to play about his fine features, there was a hard, predetermined something which each felt, as if each heard a creaking of wheels. A mighty respect each was finding for the other, — and more, it was accompanied with sensations more tender by far; but neither could fail to feel a growing rage at what made further speech impossible.

How they parted that night neither knew. Only a vague memory remained. Astrée had gone to sleep with his name upon her lips. Ami had tossed himself into a dream, in which were delirious words of affection, even languorous caresses and rushes of blood to his face, which woke him. Then he slept again, — the bright, small eyes of Louise of Savoy and the faces of the king and the comtesse looking down upon his dream of love.

The days which lay between that hour and this in which we have found them talking of Lefevre the Re-

former, had been days of revelation. Ami had found out for himself the wicked plot which contemplated the disgrace of both Astrée and himself; and now he saw, or thought he saw, within the hateful gloom a soul to whom he was bound in the holy secret of knightly love.

The reddening leaves upon the trellis were shaking with the song which came swelling forth from the tiny throat which yonder in the nodding pine was bursting with melody; and much as Ami loved the name of Lefevre, his soul was a tremble with a name which he had just accustomed his lips to pronounce alone, — *Astrée!*

As she went on to tell him what the confessor — who, as the comtesse feared, had planted the seeds of the Reformation within Astrée — had said to her about Lefevre, her face became animated and her lips dropped sentences which to Ami were far more eloquent than those of the Ciceronians themselves. Not, however, until she began, in a tone half confessing to him, half reassuring to herself, to tell him of the fears with which she had set out toward the capital, did her voice seize his very heart. It was so piteous and so true that the true knight was roused.

"The Comtesse de Chateaubriand said that I could trust my questions and fears to you; and yet I fear that this is not right."

Ami saw the lips labor and the eyes grow misty as she hesitated; and then, like a white lightning-streak from a black cloud, there came the words: "The damnation they meant shall fail, except to them!"

"I am afraid!" she cried softly, and looked as if she would have crept somewhere for safety.

"Not of me, I beg you!" and the stalwart knight rose to his full height, looking as tenderly as he did truly into her very soul.

"No; not of you! But I wish I dare feel that no

harm was intended. The comtesse asks me strange questions."

Ami thought how the king had asked him of his opinion of the "star;" and for the first time, for a moment, the knight hated the king.

He understood it all now. Within the heat of his knightly ire his eye grew prophetic. He could see within this woman a future dear beyond all else to him. As she went on to tell him of her sorrow at finding the court so debased, the negligence visited on the queen, the absence of the Comte de Chateaubriand, the treatment of Bourbon, Ami saw how surely within that incomparable beauty of form and face dwelt a soul whose spiritual life would make this loveliness its throne. Without a spiritual life she seemed too lovely, too fascinating.

"Only an *adopted* sister," said he to his heart, as never the Comtesse de Chateaubriand had said it to hers. "Yes; she has something which the comtesse never had. A saint may be even as beautiful."

Ami saw in Astrée — for he was far from being insensible to her physical charms — that exquisite profile so instinct with warm sentiment, and that honest beautifulness of eye which illuminated his conscience. It was as different from the dull lassitude in the eyes about the court, as is the free, stimulating scent of a rose from the sickly odor which often infects the hot air.

On and on she talked, with innocent grace, answering Ami's questions, proposing others, until each saw that they had escaped the prepared meshes.

"You are terrified with the prospect of being enslaved here. Are you willing to trust your whole self to any one?" he ventured.

She looked out into the sky.

"How different it all is from the indolent voluptuousness of this court!" he thought, as she seemed to be searching for God.

The sky was like a green, dreamy sea. Swallows twittered about the red leaves, some of which were falling through the sighing warmth of the late summer. Nature everywhere was taking a long, deep, languid breath, from the Infinite Love. The vista, edged with foliage, was becoming a blurred memory, as he listened for her voice which had vibrated in such tenderness. He knew she was as simple as a child, and that she knew not what had led her to him amid all this cursed doubt.

Why should he stand and burn with such a hope which might be such a rapture? She had not understood him, he was sure. "She wonders if, after all, any man here is trustworthy," divined Ami.

Ah, Ami! she *has* understood. Yes; she only wonders if, after all, any man here is worthy of trust. She is trying to escape the cynicalness which Comtesse de Chateaubriand's experiences have just been teaching her, despite the compliments that lady has lavished on you!

"You are not willing to be enslaved?" faltered the knight, never so certain of how weak he was.

"I am willing to be enslaved in your love, in order that I may be free," she said; and at once the slender hands clasped his, as they stood close together under the reddening leaves.

"Astrée!" said he, his lips still warm with the glow of her own, "I remember that once, when I was a little child, away, far away from this place, I saw the damp and chill clouds gather about the little hills and hide them. My father — poor man! he was cruelly slain — carried me, led me, then carried me again, up and on, until we two looked down on it all, — the whole cloud-covered realm. Then we saw a white peak, like silver for gleaming purity, rising out of the dark mist. It had passed out of my mind until just now."

"Mayhap," lisped the joyous Astrée, as she stopped again with him under the white poplars and looked proudly upon the pure lines in his face, — "mayhap our Father, God, has led us both above the sordid mists which were sent to envelop us; and we now behold coming up out of all that murkiness a love as pure as it is true."

They hesitated, each soul drinking in the new luxury of plighted love; and Ami seemed to have sipped eloquence from lips which knew not their own secret power, as he said: "Astrée! my darling Astrée! I ought not to have waited. I was afraid of you. Oh, you sweet one, you seemed *too* beautiful! The very flavor of your loveliness is now my soul's hope. You have dreamy eyes, my own! But I shall keep the one great dream there — "

Both of the lovers were startled, and instantly they were in hiding.

They saw the King of France and Mme. de Chateaubriand coming. Astrée crept so close to Ami, as these passed by, that she could feel the throb of Ami's heart. Each shuddered at the *abandon* of the comtesse. The wind, which had just sprung up, had a voice of pity as it wailed through the larches and lifted the long black hair of the king. His eyes were languorous, as they sought to mark the decline of the sun which still empurpled the grass. Each was silent.

A moment before, under the acacias, the shivering sovereign had said to his favorite: "It has all gone wrong for us, all right for them. Ami loves Astrée deeply and honorably. She also is bound to him in the purest affection. Our affair cannot hide behind them. We must never break two such hearts. Ours must throw no shadow over their rapturous love. They will come back to the palace to-night — believe me! — betrothed."

"Rid your Majesty's self of him!" she had replied half in anger.

"I cannot! I cannot, if I will," said the French King. "The astrologer said it. Ah, sweet love! the astrologer told me; and Marignano proved the astrologer to be a seer."

CHAPTER XXIV.

EASTER AT GLASTONBURY.

The chains which cramp us most are those which weigh on us least.
MME. SWETCHINE.

ON the day upon which Francis I., after incredible hardships, had reached the plains of Saluzzo, Pope Leo X. made Thomas Wolsey cardinal; and at the very moment upon which Ami, the French knight, on the way to Bologna was annoying his sovereign with what is yet called theoretical politics, Vian, the English monk, was attending the Abbot of Glastonbury, as he assisted the Abbot of Westminster in carrying the red hat to the high altar. Unimpressed with the din of bells and voices which made all London tremble, unmoved by the magnificence of Wolsey and the Te Deum which had just ceased to sound in his ears, Vian was beyond measure delighted to reflect that the sermon was preached by no less a representative of "the new learning" than Dr. John Colet, Dean of St. Paul's.

For the best of reasons this wearied young man felt himself enthralled at once with admiration for the newly made cardinal Wolsey, who had doubtless selected the preacher.

"Could his Holiness Leo X. have known that the man whom, with Erasmus and Sir Thomas More, the Abbot of Glastonbury had distrusted as heretical almost beyond

toleration, was to preach this sermon?" thought Vian, as they walked through the western door toward the banquet-hall.

"Leo X. is only a delightful pagan in the position of a great Christian." These words of Fra Giovanni, which had been spoken to his uneasy innocence at Glastonbury, often came back to Vian, when in later days he had to know more of both Pope and Cardinal.

Before the days of rejoicing at London were concluded, Vian was made aware that the good Abbot Richard Beere himself had less antipathy to "the new learning" than had manifested itself on previous occasions. Perhaps a long conversation which that spiritual dignitary held with the new cardinal reconciled him in some greater measure to the schemes of the scholars, as it certainly did render Richard Beere in various ways an earnest supporter of the prelate, who at that hour could be reached only by passing through many tapestried rooms, and who, attired as he was in a violet-colored rochet half covered with a tippet of sable, was surrounded by gentlemen in crimson velvet overhung with chains of gold, while he amused himself with statecraft, costly portraiture, or exquisite music.

"Ah!" said Abbot Richard, "my son Vian, I like the new cardinal. He — the saints forefend it! — but he will at some time demand you from Glastonbury. I have oftentimes been harsh in my words with the men of 'the new learning.' Even yet I must keep heresy out of my abbey, though Master Colet speaks eloquently."

Vian saw, or thought he saw, many things within these nebulous remarks.

Had the sub-prior and Ammonius at Cambridge really dreamed of getting him into Wolsey's service, because the abbot had given up making out of him a good ecclesiastic?

Was the Lord Abbot of Glastonbury at last so con-

vinced that the men of "the new learning" meant well and did wisely for England and the Church, that he enjoyed John Colet?

Any answer to either of these questions meant much to our thoughtful and unquiet monk.

It is true that Vian and the box which he and the subprior brought back with them from Lutterworth to Glastonbury had done much in that sacred shrine of Catholic orthodoxy to foster a desire in the soul of its revered head for some sort of relief. Not a day had passed after Vian's return until Fra Giovanni, who had used his accustomed whip upon the abbot to obtain the office, had become sole custodian of the Aldines and the Wycliffe letters. That signified trouble to Richard Beere. He was aware that something either unduly salacious or very unorthodox — at all events, something revolutionary of his pious plans — had come into the abbey in such a way as to threaten no end of discomfort. But he was powerless. He could humiliate the Duke of Suffolk, but he could not deny Fra Giovanni.

Easter Sunday, 1517, found Vian, whose talent for music and whose excellent voice had made him prominent in all that related to the festival ceremonies, weary with the exercises of the seven days preceding.

"Ah!" said the wheezing Giovanni, whom nothing but a very severe attack of asthma could entirely silence, "it is well for your voice that pious souls have commanded stillness in the cloisters for three days. The dumb saints are the holier, at all events."

"It is not what cometh into a man," said Vian, "but what goeth out, that defileth."

"True," gasped the Italian. "Since you came from Lutterworth, a good deal of heresy has been going into the brethren here. It would ruin Glastonbury to have it all come out. Those letters of that brazen heretic John Wycliffe have been half worn out by the monks,

who often have not time to stuff them beneath their stoles carefully, when they hear Abbot Richard's footsteps or my orthodox wheezing. Vian, nothing has done so much for the holy faith in Glastonbury for an hundred years, save the blooming thorn and my bundle of birchen rods, as has my whistling windpipe. I have seen many a brother put heresy under his foot, — that is, I have beheld him stuff one of those letters of John Wycliffe in his shoe when I came within hearing. It is a great gain for orthodoxy, that after the bell-ringing these half-grown saints of ours have to unshoe themselves and walk barefoot in the procession. John Wycliffe had never so many pious walks, as he has had since you brought him to Richard Beere's abbey. Did you find your tongue before Tierce?"

Vian knew that the sly old Giovanni referred to the scene of Monday before entering chapter. It was the annual book-gathering. He himself had been frightened nearly out of his wits, for fear of losing some of the precious books; and he had been amused almost beyond expression at monks who were getting their souls ready for the prostrate psalms.

The keeper of the library had laid out upon the carpet in the chapter every book, as the abbot supposed, which helped to constitute the limited but priceless collection from which the monks could borrow. Every borrower brought with him the book which had been loaned to him. The sentence of the Benedictine rule was solemnly read. Giovanni's eyes twinkled with humor as the sermon proceeded, which was clearly directed against the reading of such books as might offend piety or uproot the faith. The old man wheezed so immoderately when the keeper read the list of books loaned to the various monks, that each monk was reminded of the many times in the course of the year on which the asthma of the Italian had suddenly precluded him from

enjoying a stolen literary feast with one of Vian's "Lutterworth Collection," as they had named it.

"It was amazing to see how many of the brethren who had not read the books which they had borrowed had to ask for pardon," remarked Vian, complacently, as he afterward spoke of the day.

"Every one of them," laughed Giovanni, "had read one of the Wycliffe letters; and some had read 'Piers Plowman' and the 'Praise of Folly' twice. I had to flog the abbot himself last year, for laughing at the story of the Mendicant friars. I caught him reading it on the day of the Feast of the She-Ass. Abbot Richard was not thinking about his Lord riding that blameless animal, when I entered and saw him quite excited. He instantly dropped the book and lifting his eyes to heaven, and looking as if the ass were speaking, as you know the animal does in the procession when Balaam spurs her on, he said, "Why do you hurt me so with your spurs?"

Vian could not repress his merriment at this; but Giovanni continued: "I said, 'My Lord Abbot, *I* am not Balaam spurring you; but, for all I know, you may be the other —' whereat, rallying from the first bewilderment into which I had plunged him, he became furious with holy rage at me."

"What!" said Vian; "Giovanni, did you flog him?"

"That I did; why not?" cried the old hypocrite, as he choked with laughter. "I shall not allow the Abbot of Glastonbury to read such pernicious books on such holy days, whatever the rest of you do. I must keep the head of this sacred institution from the perils of heresy."

Vian's services to the Lord Abbot Richard on that Easter Sunday were most hearty and numerous. He was in an unsettled state of mind. He even hoped that this would prove to be his last Easter in Glastonbury; and much as he loved the holy shrine, all the world without

was calling him with a voice which he had never heard before.

In the procession to the crucifix after Lauds, he walked with solemn worshipfulness, thinking of the changes which had come and gone, and the unchanged power of his Redeemer's cross. Reason in so young a man has its struggle with imagination, within the eye and ear, because through them come the strongest appeals to this picture-making and picture-discerning faculty. One seems to have been so sure of one's faith, which was really the faith or perhaps only the belief of some one else, that when to the tossed soul, by some repeated scene, the era of unquestioning acquiescence is brought back, there is usually a disposition to leave the uneasy task of thought for the balmy passiveness of memory.

So Vian felt, especially as they proceeded to perform the office of the sepulchre.

He was still attired in his fringed cope and the other garments constituting the robe of a singer. His hood was hanging nearly to his feet; and the graceful form of the young monk was half discovering itself beneath the folds which fell about him, as he looked upon the three deacons who were clothed to represent the three Marys, who now were advancing through the middle of the choir and were saying with pathos, as they neared the sepulchre, "Who will roll away for us the stone at the door of the sepulchre?"

As, suddenly, a beautiful lad with angelic look and dress appeared, and the golden wheat-ear which he held was showing richly against his stainless alb, Vian remembered that this was his own place years before, and that now instead he was a struggling doubter, looking upon much within the abbey as superstitious, and sure to look upon this story of the resurrection of Christ as a fable also, if he could not find some securer resting-place than either Rome or Reason.

"Whom do you seek in the grave?" lisped the voice, which was full of the celestial music of innocent childhood.

"Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified," was the answer of the three, each of whom still held a vase before him.

The finger of the white-robed boy pointed to the sepulchre; and his unshaken voice said, "He is not here; he is risen." The angel had departed with the echo of these words.

Two priests — each of whom Vian knew to be far from angelic in his behavior — now spoke from the places without the tomb, where they solemnly asked, "Whom seek ye?"

"Sir," answered a deacon whom Vian now recognized as a violent lover of the abbot's wine, — "sir, if you have taken him off, tell us." The cross then shone in the priest's hand; and the Marys kissed the tomb.

Vian was half inclined to feel repentant that he had allowed his mind to be critical at all, as he remembered his own past. Indeed, he was about ready to yield to the assumption that the personal character of a priest could in no way affect the value of his ministrations. At that moment, however, a trifling and base monk, who had only the recommendation of possessing a certain dramatic talent, appeared clothed in a white alb and stole, stood before the sepulchre, and said, "Mary!"

The deacon habited as Mary was instantly at his feet; and the profligate who continued to act his part, blessed, bowed, uttered sacred phrases, until the censer was lifted before the altar, and Vian found himself trying to sing the "Te Deum."

A shaken faith is never so weak as when it tries to sing. Every tone was dirge-like.

"This night is the beginning of Easter week," said he; "monks cannot converse in the cloister, thanks to the

saints for that! I should say something very sinful, if I could talk in the cloisters. Ah, yes! I will read my book which enlightens me concerning the transmigration of souls."

But Giovanni would not let Vian read or remain quiet. Too good a chance was this for the stirring up of the Wycliffite ancestry which slumbered not within Vian's veins; if only Fra Giovanni could catch him, Vian's day would be made miserable indeed.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE GROWING PROBLEM.

"Et exiit nesciens qui iret."

IT was soon smiling summer within and without the abbey walls. Fra Giovanni had persuaded the abbot that Vian needed fresh air; and Richard Beere allowed them a freedom about the whole valley and the Avalonian hills quite unequalled.

"How is it," said Vian, who never abused his liberty to go without, "that I am permitted a liberty that no other brother has?"

The monk was growing suspicious that Abbot Richard was actually anxious to terminate his connection with Glastonbury. The thought wounded his spirit, — a spirit without a trace of sourness in it, which therefore made him nestle close to the abbey, as a boy who is sweet-tempered will cling even to one who is tired of him.

Never does such a soul cling so tenderly to institutions as when the faith of which they are the embodiments seems to be fading away out of his thought. Never did Vian find so much within those walls, over which he had climbed once to follow More and Erasmus, as now, when for a reasonable grasp upon the Catholic faith, he would have willingly given up all heresies, heretics, and new

learning, with his books, yea, the world itself, which had recently grown so interesting.

"There is, however," said he, "something so reasonable within these new ideas that I do not seem to possess them at all. Rather, they possess me. It seems foolish for me to talk about my giving them up. Rather, let me say, will they give *me* up?"

How rapidly was this English protester also getting beyond the protestantism of the German monk, even unto the protestantism of which blind followers of the German monk have been fearful, — even unto the protestantism of Coleridge, with his belief in Scripture inspiration grounded upon the fact, "The Bible *finds* me!" And yet how often would Vian return, vainly seeking to assure himself that he had not gone very far, after all!

Beautiful Glastonbury! It was becoming as beautiful as is the grave of a lost belief, from which the soul never desires to depart.

The redwings were flying upon the walls with the last of the meadow-berries in their bills; and the few fieldfares, which had not gone away with winter and spring, were chasing after the gray wagtails upon the high enclosure, as if they too ought to be gone. In the churchyard the willow-warbler, having swept upward from the neighborhood of the stream, and now resting upon the sarcophagus of King Arthur or flitting over to the pyramids near by, was uttering from his light yellow breast cadences such as he alone in England may create out of the innumerable half-tones with which he and the black-cap have to do, with such varying mastery. Yellowhammers were pushing their way into the elms with an offensive energy, which made Vian think of some reformer pecking away upon a defunct article of belief, simply because it is easy to make a hole in it; and down in the sacred spring audacious blue-tits were taking baths; or along the stone sides of St. Joseph's Chapel nut-hatchers

and tree-creepers were finding insects, and chattering about it, as would a jovial heretic concerning some of the follies of the Church which he had discovered. Blackbirds were never so lustrous or so noisy; thrushes were never so abundant or familiar with Glastonbury thorn. White-throats were never so careless about their notes, which came indifferently in the form of a squawk or a warble; while the chiff-chaff's tone was as mellow as the sunshine which enwrapped in a mist of gold the dark brown nightingale, that "creature of a fiery heart."

"But what of all these?" said Vian, as he and Giovanni walked along over the green waste,— for such the soft sward came to be, the instant Vian began to think. "These birds do not get their creed here. Those buildings and our ceremonies lie at the other extreme of life. Not a solitary tone could that robin yonder extract out of all our fussy processions and ornamented festival cloths."

"No," answered Giovanni, who put into the bird's throat only as much of naturalism as our modern commentator inserts of supernaturalism, — "no, Vian, the bird is a pure pagan. You are getting the right point of view. You feel as you ought to feel, that what the bird has, you ought to have; what the bird is, you ought to be, — simply natural, without any creed about sounds and sky and abbots. What the bird knows about the sky is enough; it flies right into it. What the bird knows about life is sufficient; it just lives it, and asks no questions. It has no theories about sounds; it just sings. We have theories. When they become a little worn, and when many people believe that they are the last theories we shall ever get, we make them into creeds. When we think they will not last without defences, we build great monasteries in which to teach and mumble and preach them. When they become quite doubtful, we burn people in their name. We religious birds kill others, not because they

do not sing well, but either because they do not sing our tune, or because they do not hold to our opinions about sounds. That is the beginning and end of it, Vian. These birds are all pagans; they do as Nature tells them."

Vian was entirely dazzled for a moment by this very bright philosophy of spiritual struggle.

He looked into the calm blue of Giovanni's eye, noted again the Grecian cast of his features as never before, and beheld on his lips the expression of that view of man and his possibilities which in the nineteenth century has found a poet — the most Grecian of our choir of singers — whose song has this one ethical note, —

> "Wouldst thou be as these are, live as they,
> Unaffrighted by the silence round them,
> Undistracted by the sights they see."

Surely this was, this is, the Renaissance, in its ministry concerning creed-making and practical conduct, — be it the Renaissance of the sixteenth century under Pico della Mirandola, or the Renaissance of the nineteenth century under Matthew Arnold, — "a revival of the spirit of classical antiquity; a restoration of the divinity, the joyousness of Nature, discerning little or perhaps nothing of a steadfast faith in humanity, an eager aspiration after justice, or a recognition of the equality of rights amongst all mankind."

Was that to be all? All, indeed, until the intellect communicated its light to the conscience. In Vian, the child of a Wycliffite, that communication between intellect and conscience was in the blood.

"Alas, Fra Giovanni!" said he, as he stood over the nest of a sedge-warbler which his foot had just disturbed, and which he had watched as it flew out into the purple radiance, "you come from Italy, bringing with you the revival of learning. Something beside this is in the air. Your own Greece had such kind of humanity, — no

Holy Church there to repress its thinking; such kind of a man wrote the 'Phædo' as could not be a pagan and nothing more. Plato was a prophet, as was also Malachi, of the Christ."

"What did Plato prophesy?" asked Giovanni, with interest.

"He said: 'We must lay hold of the best human opinion, in order that, borne on it as on a raft, we may sail over the dangerous sea of life, unless we can find a stronger boat, or some word of God, which will more surely and safely carry us.'"

Giovanni was silent for a moment; and when he began to speak, Vian continued: "But this is what I wanted to say, — the bird has no need of a creed. Perhaps I have no need of one. The bird has not my feeling of aspiration and of dependence, or my thirst for the infinite. These are as much for me and for my life as the bird's wings or the bird's cry for his life. My wings are these desires and impulses toward what we call truth. I must work them, if I dare to be a man, as the bird must work his wings to reach a bird's destiny. Giovanni, with a bird's problems and solutions, I could easily adopt and live inside a bird's philosophy of life. With a man's problems, I must have, somewhere and at some time, a philosophy of life as comprehensive as man is. It may be that the search for it is all I may be permitted to have. Even so; then I shall get a man's manhood in searching for it."

"Well," said old Giovanni, quite swept from his own position by the nobility of Vian's purpose, "you will get truth too. Indeed, manhood is only truth in the form of humanity."

"Well, then," said Vian, who was not likely to stop at negatives, "it may be true that I will get — yes, every soul must obtain the creed, and *all* the creed which it needs, by its singing and flying, just as the bird gets its

belief — no!" and Vian saw for the first time the relative greatness of belief and faith, — "its faith," said he, deliberately, — "the working belief, the creed in its throat and wings, which it is willing to sing with and fly with. Ah, Giovanni, I am in deep water, but I see my way out. I mean this," — and Vian began again, — "every man gets his faith for himself by flying out upon his dream of destiny."

But that statement seemed to disappoint him.

"I do not understand you now," wheezed the Italian.

"I do not believe that I do," laughed Vian, as he grappled again with the thought which lies at the root of all saving faith (if by that we mean the faith that saves). "I mean," pursued he, "that these thirsts for the truth, for goodness, for the infinite are whispers of destiny. The eternal beauty is for me, if I yearn for it. Communion with God is for me, if I believe when I am at my best that I cannot do without it. I feel vaguely that righteousness is my destiny; that is what I meant by a dream of destiny. Now, if I can fling myself out upon it, trust it, sing it, and fly with it, as the bird does with what has come in like an instinct into its breast, I shall find out more and more about it, and finally I shall know it."

"Yes; but that will not be a creed, but a knowledge," said Fra Giovanni.

"A creed is made up of facts which I know," said the eager monk. "But there will always be a feeling of the existence of a truth just beyond the truth, which I have found out by trusting my being to the one the presence of which just before I had felt; and that dreamed of truth I shall reckon upon as a fact too. That will be my belief too."

Giovanni was now so far into Vian's soul, that he dared not be rude with airing his own settled doubt, — doubt which, like most scepticism, had grown up under

the shadow of superstitions or under the miasma generated by dead articles of faith which had never felt the touch of his personal life; but he ventured to put a single question, which drew from Vian his deepest radicalism.

"What, then," said the Italian, "if one can make all the creed he needs by doing with a man's highest instincts or suspicions what the bird does by its characteristic impulses, — I say, what then are the uses of the Scriptures, which your Wycliffite father and the Lollards desired to put into the hands of the common ignorant people, for their salvation?"

Vian was now so far advanced with his philosophy of faith, that the question did not pause upon Giovanni's lips for a reply.

"Why," said the younger monk, "I know the import of your question. You would make me out a disbeliever in the Scriptures because I do not believe somebody's interpretation of them; or you say that my views of the way of finding truths for one's creed would leave nothing for the Revelation to do for men's faith. You want to know the answer to this: if by doing righteousness in following one's best suspicions, one finds out what one needs to know, why did God give such a revelation, and why should the common people have it for themselves?"

"Precisely," said the anxious Italian. "The age behind us worshipped the Church; the next age will probably worship a book."

"Well," said Vian, as he took his vellum copy of Wycliffe's New Testament from beneath his cope, "the Scriptures have within them a revelation, — a most necessary revelation. Of course, we are here alone, and I can talk with you freely. We may then put out of our minds much of this monkish talk about the Blessed Virgin. This book is not *her* biography."

Giovanni was both amazed and amused at Vian's intrepidity. Neither of them could feel, however, that

these curious views of this monk, who had been simply driven from point to point, as a protester, would some day be shared by others, or become the means of depopulating theological seminaries. Giovanni had unconsciously hinted that perhaps the Reformers, which he had heard of, were likely to institute bibliolatry. Neither saw that a true use of the Scriptures would ultimately hurry the human soul from the Scriptures themselves to the Christ whom they revealed. Long, however, has been the battle of Christianity against both ecclesiolatry and bibliolatry.

"This book is the story of the appearance and words of God's revelation of Himself in humanity, in His incarnation in Jesus Christ who is our Lord. The books of the Old Testament — and John Wycliffe has translated all — are the history of that hope which God gave to mankind. In this New Testament the hope is realized. Plato, as I believe, was a prophet. Christ is that 'word of God,' for which he looked. Now, all who in any age or place have done righteousness are accepted of God. This the Scriptures teach. He has not left himself without a witness in any time. Cicero and Pythagoras are witnesses. Mankind would have gone on, could have gone on obtaining more truth, as I say, by trusting themselves to what they had already; but in the fulness of time, God, who had been making revelations of Himself in many ways, finding the world ready, revealed Himself just as any father would, in His Son. Do you understand me?"

"Yes; but it is like a vague vision to me," said Giovanni.

"These Scriptures come to a man, who is like a bird, doing what he ought with his instincts to sing — that is, trying to make life harmonious — and to fly, — that is, to go upward and onward in everything. They come as a revelation, not only of something outside of him, such

as the fact that his Father will save him from sin, but of something inside of him. They show the righteousness of these aspirations, and the godliness of these thirsts of his soul. The Scriptures have a revelation of One who fulfils all the unfulfilled, and makes humanity sure of the path below which tends heavenward, by the fact that we see that it runs straight into the path from the throne of God, coming this way toward earth. Oh!"— and Vian gave it up, — "you do not see it as I seem to see it sometimes."

"Well, then," said Giovanni, who saw more than did Vian of the consequences of such opinions, "all truth will harmonize with the truth of Scriptures."

"Yes; when, as the birds, we sing it and fly with it. Do you know what I mean? We must get out of abbeys, where our throats are tied up and our wings are clipped; we must *live* truth to know that it is truth. It will all harmonize. I begin to see now that the doctrine of the transmigration of the soul in Pythagoras is like Paul's doctrine."

It had grown late. Fra Giovanni and Vian hurried back to the abbey to find no less an ecclesiastic than the sub-chanter sound asleep in Vian's cell. The lantern which was used in the Feast of Fools was burning low; and Vian's copy of the "Adagia" of Erasmus was open. The sub-chanter's hand was resting on the passage which has been thus translated: "Wilt thou know what are the true riches for a pope? Listen to the first of the Popes: 'Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee. In the name of Jesus, rise and walk.'"

"Sub-chanters will not sleep on that text always," said Giovanni.

CHAPTER XXVI.

AN IMPASSABLE ABYSS.

Love works at the centre,
Heart-heaving alway;
Forth speed the strong pulses
To the borders of day.

EMERSON.

AS, on the morning of the 20th of April, Alke started from the cottage to tend the goats, it was noticeable that for some reason she was anxious to assure herself of the safety of the Virgil manuscript, which had been in her possession for nearly a twelvemonth. She also, and most lovingly, asserted her independence of Gaspar's overmastering information as to the best nooks among the mountains in which the lean goats might obtain nourishing pasture.

Alke had been possessed of strange and incommunicable feelings since she had made the promise of a day before to meet the young peasant, who had so delighted her with finding a purchaser for her illuminations, and who had obliged her still more deeply with the Virgil manuscript.

"My child," said Gaspar, "I have surest confidence in you; and yet, if I had believed, as do the monks of Turin, in the Devil's part in this world, I should have said that my Alke had met the Devil, and that he had

given you the manuscript. It is certain that the parchment which you fetched to me is the manuscript for which Erasmus came to Turin many years ago."

Alke had refused, for the sake of the pledge which she had given to the youth, even to describe him to her father; and the scholarly Gaspar had willingly allowed his child the privilege of making this refusal. Not a syllable had been spoken to the Barbé of her possession.

"The Barbé is really afraid that we are becoming heretics here, — pagans, indeed, I ought to say. He tells me that this is all a revival, not of Christian, but of pagan Rome. He looks at my Aldine 'Homer' and 'Demosthenes,' and shrugging his shoulders, he flees to 'Nobla Leycon,' and the 'Babylonian Captivity,'" said the child of the Renaissance.

"The Barbé has looked with wonder at the coins which Master Erasmus left for me so long ago," added Alke.

"What said he? I did not know he had seen them."

"He took the one on which is the head of Jupiter, and he said: 'Child! your father loves Greece and Rome too well. *Our* city is neither Athens nor Rome, but Jerusalem. Our God is the Omnipotent Father;' and then he spoke sharply to me: 'Child! Diocletian, the persecutor of Christians, worshipped at the shrine of Jupiter.'"

"What answer made you, daughter?"

"That I did not worship any images."

"What said our Barbé?"

"He said that the things of Greece and Rome were carnal and unsavory. He would not have me worship either the Virgin or ancient and fabulous gods."

Gaspar was all interest, and was also not a little rebellious in his heart against the Barbé. Thorough Walden-

sian that he was, he knew that neither his fraternity nor his minister understood the all-illuminating effect of the revival of ancient learning upon Mediæval Europe. In every line of Erasmus he read the effect of the Renaissance in the preparation it had made and was yet making for a reformation. These very coins had made Gaspar a freer man.

"Our Barbé cannot understand it," said he to Alke. "You must make for him a beautiful copy of the canticle he loves most."

As Alke, before going forth to the pastures, had taken the canticle in her hand, eager to find such suggestions of color in Nature or in her own soul as would enrich its spiritual harmonies, she felt as honest a pride in being able to convince the Barbé of her orthodoxy as she felt in possessing the Virgil manuscript, for the sight of which the eyes of Erasmus were still longing. Her sunny hair floated down to her homely girdle with a freedom which was descriptive of her hope, as for an instant she dreamed of attaching to herself the friendship of the Barbé, or of obtaining some other such treasure from the hands of the youth whom so soon she was to see.

How had she obtained the Virgil manuscript?

"I can never tell my own soul," she said, "how it came about. When did I first see this remarkable friend? I do not remember how it has all happened. When did my father consent that I should take to him my pictures and receive coins from his hand? I do not know why I should try to find out. This youth has often told me that the village priest would not allow him to buy my pictures if he knew that a Waldensian had painted them. It appears reasonable enough. I have been silent — too silent? Have I done wrong? No; I have kept the fiends of hunger and cold from our doorway, and I am glad. He has said that he was glad to talk with me about the poets and singers of the olden time. Has it

been wrong? He has known that I am a Waldensian's daughter, and — "

Alke was in a different mood when these considerations had pressed themselves upon her in this soliloquy. She felt, however, that for some reason this must be the last time she should meet him without the knowledge of her father.

"My Saviour knows that I have not done — no, I have not thought — wrong. Hereafter, alas! hereafter I shall *do* wrong if I see him again," she whispered.

What may be called her father's Puritanism had kept her from telling him what had gone on, from time to time, within the soul of this almost companionless girl who loved learning. She now tried to think of something beside her new moral problem. Her mind found no ease in contemplating the contrast, of which she was aware, between the condition of her Waldensian neighbors near La Torre and that of herself and her father. She knew not with whomsoever she might hold converse concerning the things which were dearest to her above all else, save religion, if she were to lose the infrequent companionship of this youth.

"Beside my father and the Barbé, who does not like to talk of Greece or Rome, there is none."

For the first time the maiden felt a pang at the prospect. Never appeared so low and poor the life of the other Waldensians with whom formerly as a child, now as a teacher and sympathetic friend and half-adored cynosure of all hearts, she had lived, feeling betimes that the kingdom of God on earth had something, not perhaps better, but possibly as good, and withal more pleasant and comfortable for her. As she went along toward the pastures, passing cottage after cottage, from which the little children came swarming to greet her, begging also to follow her, she pitied the lives which were able to endure, even at the demand of such

penury as had been hers, a life without culture and its hopes.

"But this feeling is altogether ignoble and unworthy of a Christian," she kept saying, as with the canticle in her hand she looked into the cottages, seeing infants who were crying in their cradles, recognizing older children who by means of ladders had come out of the upper apartments of these galleried homes, and who were yelling lustily for the chance of kissing her whom they had learned to reverence, while she paused to smile upon some demure girl who was teaching the younger ones of a family the catechism.

Amid all this, her mind was set upon the fact that, day after day, she had been meeting a young man who, she did not doubt, was a Romanist; that she had even allowed him, when the passion for literature swallowed up all ideas of propriety, to give her a priceless parchment; that she had so believed in her own good cause of keeping starvation from the door of her father, and had so confided in the young man's word, which had never proven false, as to furnish him with illuminations which he had conveyed to the Monastery of Turin. Could it all be wrong?

It flashed upon her: "He may be a novice, or even a monk, in disguise."

It was of some comfort to reflect, in this connection, that secrecy could be depended upon as a necessity upon his part, and that, whatever might happen in what Alke had determined should be a last interview, she had brought no shame either upon her father or his cause, and that, as she herself said, "never was the Virgil manuscript so safe."

Soon after she had reached the pastures, Alke saw the young man coming around the abrupt hillside, and bearing a heavy load of wood upon his back.

"For whom do you gather fagots at this hour in the

morning?" inquired Alke, her opening lips as ruddy as the rose of dawn whose vanishing petals still lay upon the hills. Her voice, which usually was made weary by this time by outpouring its song upon the morning, was not free from a certain stern and penetrative sharpness which the young man had never felt in it before.

The inquiry was altogether too unexpected; and any attempt to answer it would be too perilous. The youth tried to feign dulness of hearing and preoccupation of mind or interest in the canticle which, by this time, Alke had found to be full of artistic possibilities. Indeed, so many were his attempts to escape the force of her query that he succeeded in none. For the first time the natures had measured each other's strength.

"You would answer me manfully," she said; and she closed the canticle from his view, hiding also her bare feet beneath her coarse skirt, — "you would answer me manfully, I say, if there were no evil intention in your coming here."

Alke was likely to speak too strongly, especially when a suspicion of priestcraft crossed her mind.

"Do you gather fagots for him for whom you gather illuminations?"

The young man was sure that he looked like a novice, acted like a priest, and that, if he talked at all, he would make her certain that he was a monk, so guilty did his soul confess him to be of duplicity in the cause of love.

"Maiden!" ventured he.

"Ah! I have discerned the priest's tone in that talk. With that word the monks rob us!"

"I am not —"

"I know not what you are trying to say, but I must know at once what you are before we speak of aught else."

Alke's voice was full of martial music; nevertheless, the young man sat down upon his bundle of fagots.

"I will tell you all," said he, as assuringly as he might, while he took his breath slowly and generously, — "I will confess all."

"No, this is not a confessional, even for you," Alke said with an abrupt self-assurance.

"I trow not; but I do respect it and you. And I have never done you wrong. By the Mass — "

"Swear not at all. 'By the Mass!' — that is a Romish oath, at least. Ah, and yet I knew you were a Romanist. Are the fagots for the burning of a heretic?"

"I will tell you all; and if you hear me, — oh, if you *can* hear my heart, you will be satisfied. I hope I shall be blessed," said he, with a growing confidence in his tongue.

"What is your name?"

"Salmani," he answered, with evident relief.

"An Italian?"

"Even so. And I must be honest with you. You know I have never — I have not harmed you."

"Never; nor could you harm my soul," exclaimed Alke, with a shiver.

"I am not in holy orders. I hope I never shall be a priest, if — But I am of the Monastery of Turin, and I have been — "

"My saviour!" cried Alke, looking up into heaven.

"Yes, maiden, I have been your saviour." Salmani arose, his face radiant with hope.

"Advance not, Priest! Advance not! *You* are not my saviour. Even Jesus Christ has succored me."

Alke was trembling with a courageous purpose which even she did not understand; while Salmani said with admirable coolness and great calculation, —

"Your Saviour has saved you from — even from me. I have saved you from the monks. Let me tell you my story. You will respect me; perhaps you may even — "

"Stop, Salmani! I must get to my father."

"Alke, you are as safe with me. For your Saviour's sake, I will respect you."

"You *must!*" The words flashed from her burning lips.

"Your Saviour in you, in your life, in your faith, has saved you, even from me. I could not, oh, I could not do you wrong, as I have heard you talk of your Saviour. Oh that your Saviour were mine!"

At last Alke was touched. She might take her Saviour even into the bosom of this disguised novice or lay-brother, — she knew not which he was. The very thought of winning in such a conquest for her Lord made her fearless.

"If his scarred hand is upon your heart, I will trust even one who has acted a hideous lie with me," she said. "You have told me that you would tell me all."

Tears were close behind Alke's words.

"You remember that you lost a sheet of empurpled parchment containing the Pater Noster — "

"Our Lord's Prayer," interjected the Waldensian.

"Containing the Lord's Prayer — "

"*Our* Lord's Prayer," insisted the dogmatic Alke.

"Our Lord's Prayer," repeated the submissive novice. "You lost it at La Torre."

"I remember," was the reply.

"It was I, — then a novice at Turin, — I found it. The priests of that monastery were intent on finding the secret of empurpling parchment. Then they grew more anxious to have the hand and skill which created such letters as were inscribed upon it. They found out Gaspar Perrin's daughter. You have knowledge of our law, Alke?"

"I know," replied the agitated girl, "that there is an infamous law which makes it possible for priests to seize and carry off the children of those who are called heretics."

"Your inscriptions were so beautiful."

"And you were sent to seize me?"

"No; I shall confess it. I was sent to La Torre to be instructed of the priest and to obey him. You know that the Waldensians are strong and numerous here. The priest was minded to act cautiously."

"And our God is omnipotent," added Alke, her bosom swelling with grateful feeling to Heaven.

"I was told to obtain the secret."

"And you could not, because my father alone knows how to empurple parchment."

"Even so," said Salmani. "And then I was instructed to purchase all of your illuminations, which I have sent to the monastery. Oh, I have told them many lies to preserve you these long months!"

"The cowards have been very patient with you," said Alke, with bitter scorn.

"Scorn not me!" exclaimed the piqued Salmani. "I could have had you seized at any moment. But I did not, I could not —"

"Why not? Why did you not do it?" inquired Alke, as she lifted her head, and the sun twisted his most brilliant threads of light within her long, loose hair.

Salmani looked into the eyes which were both dreams and destinies; and rising again, said with uncontrollable emotion, "I loved you; even now I do love you."

"*Loved* me, Salmani, — loved me?"

"I have loved you. The Saviour, or whatever else was in your face and life — I could not do you wrong. I am a lover, though I am also a novice; and, Alke, I am at your feet. Oh, save me!"

Even Alke's forehead was crimson; and in her eyes was a strange confusion of regret and honesty, — regret that by any means any man — above all, one so soon to be a priest — should have felt, or even declared that he felt, that she had given the smallest invitation to his love;

honesty, also, which instantly averred with passionate veracity, "Salmani, I have never loved any man but my own father. I have never intimated that any other affection could become acceptable to my heart!" She said this with a womanliness which at once confused Salmani.

"But," said he, as the unfading daytime met a weird suggestion of night upon his face, "my love is not like the love of a father. It is deeper, different. Even your innocence understands me."

"It could not be so unselfish," she replied, as with the thought of her father, what she had heard of monkish schemes burned into a flame of wrath, — wrath which died away when she resolved to be just to Salmani. Then she said, with something like pain, "I could not love you."

"Have I made the love of a monk seem hateful?" said he beseechingly, as he looked up from the green-mantled pool, into which his heated soul longed to plunge itself, and saw a furnace-blast in Alke's face, overspread with soft but dark clouds of innocent pitifulness. "You do not hate me," he dared to assert.

"I do detest the associations of your life. I hate the sort of quiescence with which you have heard the vulgar priests in the monasteries plan against my own people — "

"I did not listen — "

"Or oppose. You *should* have listened, and come to our deliverance, if you loved the truth."

"I brought you the manuscript. I loved you. Where is the parchment?"

"I would rather you had brought a true heart of courage to the help of God's persecuted ones. I am nothing to be loved; the truth, Salmani, is everything."

"I bring it now, — a true heart, full of courage." Salmani stood like a statue in the midst of a conflagration,

the swirling fires seeking to get hold upon its rocky substance. "I love the truth in concrete form," he added eagerly.

"You love the form more than you love the truth itself. Forms perish. The Holy Church itself is only a once beautiful form grown hideous. Every form grows old and poor; the truth, never. You have lived in a monastery. I loathe the kind of spirit which would haunt a maiden's steps with a dagger in one hand and —"

"Where is my manuscript?" Salmani's figure assumed the proportions and attitude of wronged righteousness; and he said it again sharply: "Where is that manuscript?"

"I hate — Alas! I must not hate," she whispered, obedient now, as she was, to her sense of justice.

Salmani's lip quivered, and his feet moved nearer, when he broke forth more piteously and yet more angrily, "I could have delivered you to the monks a hundred times."

"Never alive; never without this body of mine scarred beyond their power to harm it!"

"Oh, Alke," pleaded he, "I never should have fancied it possible for me thus to kill every heaven-born sentiment in my soul."

He never seemed quite so interesting; and the Waldensian girl thought him half sublime when he spoke. But he had not been so faithful as her soul demanded.

Still the great green trees stood silent, unvexed by any breeze. Still did the poplars and elms furnish hiding-places for the purple linnets which told one another of their love. Still did the flowering meadows stretch from the foot-hills in a lovely monotony of broad magnificence, across which came the song of the cushat. Still did the tremulous young monk look upon Alke, with his sad dark eyes. She saw the living abstraction called truth. He saw only the concrete manifestation of truth before him.

Alke knew it. Everything but her heart was ready for a new declaration of love.

"For you I will flee from the monastic life and the priest of La Torre."

"Whither?" said Alke, surprised at once at finding her soul interested in the possibility of fleeing somewhere with him; and then she cried out: "I do not love you, Salmani. It would be falsity and shame to tell you other than this."

"Where is my manuscript?" demanded he, with an offended air.

The justice of the inquiry again startled Alke, and once more she thought not only of flight with Salmani, but of the precious manuscript; then she thought of her own heart. Why should *she* flee? Alas! why should he think of flight?

"My love cannot be bought with Greece or Rome."

In Alke's soul, the Renaissance had become the Reformation.

"And just that love, unpurchasable and priceless, I *must* have!"

The half-charmed bird was now affrighted. Amid the commingled green and gold of that tangled forest of problems and partial solutions, the songless one thought she discovered the eyes of a serpent. "I must have!" — alas for Salmani! he spoke it too commandingly, too roughly. Every fear of monks which had come to her, or had grown up within her, leaped up like a fierce guardian, and declared her peril. Even Salmani saw that the tide of passionate affection had run too high. Every attitude had changed. The charming maiden had the eye and look of an enraged Hebrew prophetess. From Alke's soul had departed every thought of any possible means for Salmani's escape. Every vague plan which she had begun to see afar off that might reconcile her conscience with an act which existed only in remotest

possibility, every dim suggestion which rose out of the dark questioning of her mind, as to the way in which her father and her father's cause might be propitiated, had gone. All, save Alke's loyalty to her own heart, was swept away.

"That manuscript shall not prove a grave-cloth for my honor. It is yours, Salmani! I hasten for the parchment," she at last said to the bewildered man.

"Stop! Virgin and beloved —"

But Alke had bounded across the brook which hitherto had divided them from the meadow, which was full of anemones and wild campanula, on whose edge she now stood.

The monk pursued. "Oh, my angel! stop for but a moment, and I will not pursue you another step."

"Stand there! Come not a step nearer to me!" said the beautiful creature, her rosy feet unshod and dew-washed, and almost hidden in the grasses and blossoms; her long hair floating with a breeze which had sprung up to bring orchard odors to their anguish; her hand uplifted as if in command, more lovely and more potent than the emblazoned sceptre of any queen; and her face pale with that fear which accords with heroism.

"I see it all," said Salmani. "You do not love me sufficiently to make you forget that I have been a novice and am nearly a monk of Turin. I know little of love, but I know that love is not memory; nay, rather, love is forgetfulness. It is the fire which consumes the unfortunate past, and leaves bright and pure the present and future. But, Alke, you do not love me. No! I stand here on these scaled rocks, and with the dull ground all flowerless about me; you are on the other side, amid bloom and lingering dew-drops."

"Salmani," she said, "you belong to the Church and party of persecution and fables. I am a Waldensian. The blossom and the dew-fall are ours."

"Do not break in upon my words of love with words of religion," begged Salmani. "Perhaps it is true, — ah! I believe sometimes that it *is* most true, as you say. But forget not Salmani! Alke, do not forget me in your realm of dew-fall and bloom. As I was saying, a tiny brook, over which just now I saw you leap in fear of me, who would not harm a ray of that light about your head, — only that slight stream divides us. Yet it is immeasurably wide and deep, — every drop of water in it is an abyss at present."

"Cross it, Salmani!" said the maiden, in unconscious precipitancy.

At once Salmani's eye was light itself; but as he lifted his foot, Alke cried out: "Nay; I meant not the stream before your feet, but the stream which divides our souls, — the stream immeasurably wide, whose every drop is an abyss."

"I will cross even that stream, if I may go to you, Alke, if I may have you in the dew and blossom of that new life."

"Ah, Salmani, come first to the truth. If you cross that stream because love for any woman leads you, you will fall back. If you cross it for any human life, you will be lost in the abysses. If you had crossed it for truth's sake, no power could hurl you back. If you try to cross it for God's sake alone, you will be saved."

"Oh, Alke," sobbed the young man, "I could accept your religion for my love's sake, but you do not love me. Some day I may have both love and religion which are full of dew and bloom."

"This little brook, full of secret abysses, divides us yet. God give you pure religion, poor, proud monk! I know little of love; but I believe that upon love's meadows the dew falls only out of the sky of the Infinite Love, and the flowers spring out of an eternal affection. These are the facts of genuine religion."

Alke turned to go away. Salmani saw a drop of liquid silver on the cheek which glowed like a ruby. As he turned to leave the brook-side, the maiden, and the saddest event in his experience, he simply said, —

"I will not offend or rebuke you. For my sake and my dead love's sake, keep the manuscript. The saints preserve you!"

"God, who is rich in mercy, lead you, Salmani, by His grace across the tiny but fathomless stream!" said Alke, with a shaken voice, as they parted forever.

That night Alke received her father's blessing; and Salmani, who was now wedded to a monastic life as never before, began a series of painful penances, which his spiritual lord informed him would probably make him a saint, despite the unfortunate past.

CHAPTER XXVII.

AN UNCHAINED BOOK.

"Thy word giveth light."

THERE is no such pain leagued with such promise as that of a soul disturbed with a vitalizing idea larger than itself.

Vian at Glastonbury wandered to the greensward which stretched away from the abbot's kitchen to the enclosure. There he could hear the echoes of that conversation with Giovanni which had left his mind confronted with certain problems as to the Scriptures, which he was now trying to work out. He possessed a New Testament only; but his reverent study of it had charged his spirit with certain notions as to its future influence in the world, such as had never occurred to his speculative mind before.

He now stood in the long passage-way, where through a gem-like window a soft autumnal glow fell upon him and upon his book. He was reading several passages for his own comfort. It was one of those vision-seeing hours, — one may feel farther than one may see, in their radiance, — and they often came to Vian.

For the first time in his life, he realized the significance of the open Bible. Enshackled and restless, he had already kissed it as he had often kissed the crucifix. He was chained; here was the unchained Word of God.

Several copies of the untranslated Bible he had seen, attached to posts of oak and weighted with iron chains. This was unfettered. The very leaves looked like wings. The fresh breeze and the broad world without seemed to be longing with a divine expectancy. His eye was filled with a poetic, heroic dream.

"That book, chainless and open, belongs to the world; and the monk-ridden, faithless world is begging to receive it," whispered Vian.

He could not see far into human history. But his quick instinct and fine penetration had enabled him to apprehend some facts, in what he believed to be the destined course of truth-seeking human nature. His spiritual insight came upon many texts, hitherto hidden from the popular mind, which when they should dawn upon the aspiring consciousness of circumscribed humanity, Vian was sure would produce political, religious, and social revolutions. With the Renaissance in his brain, and that book in his hand, Vian was standing at the magnificent gateway which divided Mediæval from Modern Europe. With a sense of the greatness of the moment, as his finger followed the words of some powerful sentence, his hand touched the key which should open the portal. He was only a poor and rebellious monk; but he had a vision, and visions are unaccomplished history.

A new race of Englishmen seemed to spring up and become supreme as he pondered. "These texts will transform nations," he said; and he could see dynasties and thrones tumbling down amid the all-comprehending change. His eye was upon that passage which we translate in the words, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

"Free?" said this enslaved monk. "Free by the truth? That is a conception of liberty which the world has known almost nothing about." He recalled the his-

tory he had learned. "Every inch of freedom which has been gained has been won because the truth has been found out, and that truth has become supreme over it. Free by the truth? But even the Fathers of the Church, who were less constrained than is our abbot about interpreting, — even they make this statement to apply only to the soul's slavery unto sin. Jesus Christ, who spoke it, was, methinks, greater than the Fathers, — Jesus!" and he bowed, while his soul was casting off manacles. "He was replying to them who said, 'We are of Abraham's seed, and have never been in bondage to any man;' and he meant to speak of an idea of freedom which included all liberty. Yes; *all* real freedom has to be achieved. It comes by the apprehension of truth and the use of it. Liberty to think is not the concession of the Pope, but one's personal affair. Freedom for some righteous action is not to be begged, even of some king; but it is something to be won by first winning the truth of which the action is the result."

"You are wandering in a perilous path," said some one behind him; and strong hands held him, so that Vian could not see the interlocutor, who spoke with precisely the tones which the abbot used on all serious occasions. "Vian, you are not far from the kingdom of Satan," added the speaker, who evidently had overheard Vian's excited musings.

Could it be that Abbot Richard was thus made cognizant of the secret that more of intellectual and spiritual dawn was stealing over the mind of the young monk? Vian had spoken audibly, he knew not how much; enough, as he thought, to exile him forever from the abbot's love. To have heard this much of religious and political heresy from Vian would break the heart of Abbot Richard Beere, — that Vian knew.

"Oh, Timothy," pleaded this voice, assuming professedly Pauline tones in uttering that pregnant sadness

which seeks the preventive after the mischief is done,' "Timothy, shun profane babblings!"

Vian made a desperate effort to turn himself about. He must see the anguish-wrinkled face of the holy man, Richard Beere. The sudden movement freed him, and he looked around only to gaze penitently into the laughing countenance of the sly old Fra Giovanni, who grinned in triumph and said, —

"Did you think that the Devil or Abbot Richard had you, Vian?"

"Both," was the answer, as Vian sighed his relief.

Vian had been thoroughly frightened, and was half ashamed of himself. To lose the memory of it and to assure himself, he launched out into the deep still more freely. He could trust the humorous Giovanni, to whom everything in the abbey was absurd and laughable, except "the new learning" and the stirrings of reform in such as Vian.

"The whole constabulary of the Church, instructed to keep freedom, to do police duty for liberty, — it is an abomination, if it be true that truth is the source of freedom. It needs only that men be true to God, to themselves, and to the truth."

"Perilous times are these," said Giovanni, with a smile.

"It is perilous to think, especially when the mind has been used to have an institution do one's thinking for it. But I am serious. If this Bible ever gets out into the world, the revolution of which you have told me, which has been produced in Italy and Europe by Greek and Roman letters, will be eclipsed by a more mighty revolution."

"Yes," said the older monk, with unwonted solemnity, "Italy has had a renaissance, as the French say; and its straying energies have entered England. That was all that Greece and Rome could do, — just to reach the brain of Europe. This book," — and the old wit put his hand

upon it, — "this book will reach brain, heart, and conscience. It will bring a reformation. That reformation will not stop to advise with Abbot Richard, or to consult with my old friend Leo X., — the gods be pitiful to his Holiness! You will live to see this. Mind you, Vian! do not get your own head knocked in by standing too near when the timbers begin to fall."

Vian never saw Giovanni so solemn before. He wondered, as the old monk toddled away like a child, if Giovanni might not have been a great Church Father in some other life, and by sin have fallen into being a sort of ecclesiastical court-fool, who had some moments in which his pristine mental energy manifested itself. For Vian was already a believer in the transmigration of the soul.

"There! I must go," added Giovanni to the eloquent silence.

"Farewell, Fra Giovanni!" said Vian, forgetful that in such moods the old monk took every chance to poke fun at the affectations of the Renaissance.

"Nay; say not 'Giovanni,' — that is unclassical; 'Jovianus,' Vianus!" Humor had again lit her flickering lights in the old man's eyes, which left Vian amused.

But the young monk turned the leaves again, until he came to the remark of John the Baptist in reply to those who boasted to him of Abrahamic ancestry. The significance of that reply fell upon the soul of Vian like a distinct revelation: "God out of these stones can raise up children unto Abraham."

Vian was no professional statesman, but he could see even the best of aristocracies crumble before the breath of that idea. "That," said he, "was the idea of aristocracy which gave Greece dreams of democracy." He had read the concluding words of the "Republic" of Plato with Erasmus himself, when he waited with the sub-prior at Cambridge, — "That idea was in the mind

of Savonarola at Florence. Curses upon a church which burns such a prophet!"

Giovanni had ambled back again. His activity had increased his wheeziness, and he complained of rheumatic pain; but with a clear understanding of Vian's situation, he said: "Brother Vian, when that book is free everywhere, this will be a new world. There will be no abbey, no monk;" and he trudged on as he added: "I have heard this day from the statue. We will have the sight of a bit of Athens, a fragment of the age of Praxiteles, right here in Glastonbury."

It seemed strange to Vian, as the Italian monk went away, that ancient Greece should come into England by way of Fra Giovanni; but more wonderful than Greece to him, was the fact that a story like this of the Christ in his New Testament, to whose truth he clung in spite of his passionate attachment to the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, should just now be coming again to light, in spite of priests and crowned heads.

He opened again, and his eye fell upon the words: "Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant."

Oh, if Vian had known the persons whom he seemed to see in the future! It was one of those moments of prophecy, — "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy," — and Vian saw republics rise on the ruins of tyrannies, and democracies replace dynasties.

"That idea will overturn and overturn, until no king shall be able to sit upon his throne, except as the voice of his people shall call him 'servant of all.' 'My Liege Lord' will have to be a minister of freedom and righteousness, or abdicate. Just as surely as this King of Kings and Lord of Lords — Jesus of Nazareth — finds the human brain, over the ruins of all our jewelled crosses and the hideous tyrannies in Church and kingdom, men will see that all real kingship is holy service to human-

ity. All authority is righteously granted only to a monarch or to an institution which executes the will of God in serving His purpose; and His purpose is to conform mankind, by the power of truth and goodness, into the image of His dear Son. That is all there is of 'the divine right of kings;' and that is all there is of 'the authority of the Pope.'"

Vian's eyes were lucent with these ideas, as he turned to hear footsteps again. They were the footsteps of a friend. Old Giovanni began again, on his return, to eavesdrop; and while his heart was stirred with Vian's prophecy, he was so bent on sport with the brothers who affected admiration for Greek art, that he said, —

"Brother Vian, let us flee to the majestic past. Bother the future no more. I am about ready to take the holy brethren" — and Giovanni crossed himself — "to see a fragment of the Athens of Pericles."

"What was Athens to the New Jerusalem of an unfettered human society? What is Pericles in comparison with the true prince who shall govern by the loyal agreement and by the desire of those whom he rules, governing them because he has 'the divine right' which lies in his generous aims and wise counsels and uplifting hopes for all men. Goodness has the right to be sovereign, — that is all there is of this 'divine right of kings.' What is the past but a path to the future?"

"You are eloquent enough to please a Mirandola," said Giovanni, with a sneer not altogether critical.

"Get me a chance to go from my Ferrara to some Florence," replied Vian, "as Mirandola obtained it for Savonarola, and I also will make a Lorenzo tremble."

"You will soon have the chance to leave this abbey, Vian; but do not turn reformer until you see my statue which was found near the Temple of Jupiter," interposed the old monk. "Perilous times, as Abbot Richard says, are these."

The more Vian thought of the statue, for a sight of which the band of monks in Glastonbury sympathizing with the Greek ideal had longed, the more he felt the significance of the future. How could the human soul have entertained such dreams of beauty as revealed themselves in Greek art, if the soul had not possessed such native sonship unto God, such a supreme right to develop its own energies, such an inalienable hold upon the divine will, as no bishop or crown could frustrate? The Renaissance had come, to make any kind of interference with the soul's highest possibility seem a wicked intrusion. How much lay before the human spirit, — how much in the higher, more complex arts of government, of character-making, of redeeming the material world and training all its powers into the service of man, to the glory of God, his Father! It began to come in sight like a gorgeous revelation, as Vian thought of the emancipation from hypocrisy, priestcraft, and kingcraft which an open Bible was sure to accomplish, and the omnipotent impulse toward healthful individual growth which its teachings would inspire.

"Oh!" said he to Giovanni, who had taken part in the famous controversy between the so-called "Greeks" and "Trojans," "get the 'Greeks' to view the statue. I am on fire with these ideas."

"You will consume away."

"No; these are the fires with which the bush of Moses burned, but it did not consume away."

"Your interpretations of Scripture are so bold and free that I want you to interpret my statue. Come, Vian, it is only another kind of Scripture, as was all the art of Greece, — psalms in stone, an exodus of the imagination, a conquest of an intellectual and spiritual Canaan, through chiselling of rock. Come, Vian!"

"Fra Giovanni!"

"'Jovianus,' please you, Vianus!" broke in the champion of the Renaissance.

"If I may, I will be classical," said Vian; "but these ideas are a revelation to me. They are disastrous to much that I have been taught. They burn with furious heat; but surely they have burned in the soul of man for many ages, and they have not consumed it."

"Not since the days of the good Pope Sylvester, after which the Holy Church became the dictator of government and a tyrant over the mind, trying to do something in her ambitious greed of power, — something which, by the way, must always be accomplished by the abandonment of visible power, — not since Constantine, has the fire of which you speak burned in Christendom as I have seen it burn in your brain to-day, Vian!"

"He who would be chief, let him be the servant of all," answered the young man.

"That," urged Giovanni, "the papacy has forgotten ages ago. The Pope has been the servant of nobody, not even of God Himself. The fact is that the papacy has become so huge that it has cast a shadow even upon the throne of the Omnipotent, and obscured it. No; the Pope has been nobody's servant, but he has made men his slaves. Let that idea burn in your soul, Vian; it shall not consume away."

"Men holier than the popes really believe that the burning bush is already within the sight of men," said Vian, with seriousness. "Sometimes I hear the name of one who is thought to be this new Moses."

"You remember the letters of Wycliffe to your ancestor?"

"Yes; I was thinking about that bush which burned and was not consumed away. That burning bush is to be seen in all history. I feel the heat of it. Oh, my old friend, can it be true?"

"Come, Vian, your mind needs to feast itself, not with

rough, strong food, but with refined and delicious viands. These Greece prepared for the human soul. Let us get the 'Greeks' of Glastonbury together, and inspect the statue," said Giovanni.

"Not Pericles now, but rather an obscure German monk fills my mind with wonder. Shall I admire him? No, Giovanni; not Pericles at Athens, but —"

"Ha! let me say it. I understand you, Vian. Not Pericles at Athens," — the old monk, breathing with difficulty, crept close and whispered, as his eye blazed, — "but the monk Martin Luther affixing his theses on the great door, — this is the man and that is the scene which your soul beholds. Vian, there is your new Moses!"

"And there," said Vian, "though I cannot like Luther, — but there may be the burning bush. I know that his Holiness says that it is but a squabble of monks, a noisy little row about the sacraments; but mayhap that blustering German monk has furnished another burning bush. Erasmus does not like it, — *I* cannot like the German monk! — but what if that bush burns and does not consume away?"

"You begin to respect your father at Lutterworth," said Giovanni.

"I begin to think much of the letters of Wycliffe which I believe Abbot Richard has burned up. There was a great spiritual fortune in that chest; and the abbot could not burn my inheritance. Wycliffe also was a Moses. The intellectual ancestry of the German monk, even if he is a coarse, boisterous, and unruly fellow, is illustrious."

"Most of his ancestors saw the burning of the bush," said Giovanni.

"All of them saw it. It has never been quite out of sight," added Vian. "When Saint Francis organized his band of brothers who opposed avarice, to follow their Lord into poverty; when Thomas à Kempis ignored the

pomp of men and preached the love of God; when Florentius honored only purity and attacked corruption; when John Wycliffe — "

Vian's utterance gave way to emotion as he thought of his father, but he saw in the lives he had mentioned the glorious flame.

"Vian, my brother, — Vianus, I should say, — these are perilous times. I hate the Germans. I like the calm temper and quiet power of Master Erasmus; but even in Rotterdam they are now saying that Erasmus laid the egg and this monk, Martin, has hatched it; and they speak truthfully, Vianus. Now for the statue and the Greek critics! Ahem! Let us go. Do not stand by these unchained Scriptures too long, or you will be a heretic."

Giovanni laughed as he spoke, for he had a conviction that the heretic had already come.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

AN UNCHAINED BOOK.

"And on his head were many crowns."

VIAN, as we have seen, had greatly admired what appeared to be the judicial poise and solid good sense of Erasmus. The truth was that Vian had been begotten anew intellectually, by the scholar of Rotterdam; and his gratitude blossomed in imitative affection. It was only through severe self-discipline, however, that now the young monk could wring from his nature and experience a single Erasmian sentiment. Vian was full of blood and fire; Erasmus was bloodless and cold. Vian tried to follow, though with difficulty. It was the fury of the flame admiring the crystalline opalescence of the ice-clad cliff. Still he confessed the charm. In spite of the fact that ice covered the summit, the red glory of morning had hung upon it until it blazed like an exalted beacon. Vian had found in youth the deepest love for one whose restful strength grew venerable as age came on. His very lively suspicion that he might be led to admire Luther did not becloud his conviction that if the reform must come, it ought to come and would come through culture rather than anarchy. Erasmus — such had been Vian's sober opinion — must be its leader; not the turbulent monk of Erfurt. The serenity of Dr. John Colet,

as he had founded St. Paul's School in London, preaching reform and "the new learning" at Oxford, and mingling his own fine sentiments with the glowing eloquence of Thomas More, had often made him think of that text: "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation." Vian was astonished and chagrined at his own crude dogmatism, when he remembered the frenzy of his utterances to Giovanni concerning the violent change to come.

What could Erasmus think of Luther's theses? What would More and Colet have to say about him who had already roused Germany on the sale of indulgences? Vian was hesitating again in the presence of revered names.

The reaction from such strong convictions as had asserted themselves in his soul had come. Vian had well-nigh expended his strength in utterance. When would Giovanni come to take him to see the fragment of Greek art? He laughed when he thought of it, and then was very sober, because, while, as he believed, the sly old monk had played and would play all manner of pranks upon the Glastonbury "Greeks," he did not fancy that at this time Fra Giovanni was meaning to prove to these persons who affected interest and intelligence with respect to Greek art, that they really knew nothing about it.

He yet had in mind the text, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation." He could not forget how diversely he had spoken of that German monk who had offended all Erasmian theories with his noise about the indulgences, but who, nevertheless, by his impulsiveness and humanity had attracted Vian's warm heart. He sought the open Scripture, and his eye fell upon the words, "One is your master, even Christ;" and "Henceforth let no man trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."

These brought to his mind the Wycliffe letters, the

heroism of his ancestors at Lutterworth, and the faces of courageous Lollards. "These burned letters constantly asserted that idea," said Vian. For that the Lollard had stood; and with that his cause, burning with furious flame, had illumined Europe, but had not consumed away.

Again did that open Bible appear to be an armory filled with weapons with which abuses and wrongs were to be beaten down.

"Surely no one in Wycliffe's day thought that the kingdom of heaven was coming by way of his pulpit; but," added Vian, "it may be that Erasmus is wrong, and that exactly what is unobserved power in the German monk will win the day for a less rugged and more pacific solution of the problem."

Vian had learned how the texts of an open Bible might be misapplied. But he could risk the power within the book, within the soul of man, to enforce the divine utterances.

The Church Fathers appeared at once greater and smaller than before to this scholarly young monk. They were greater than his contemporaries, because they had stood in nearer sympathy with these unencumbered words; smaller than the apostles and prophets, because even they dared not risk the fresh and revolutionary truth.

Luther the monk had already gone so far as to insist that this unchained book should be the book of the people. Vian felt the inrushing day break over Europe. It was but an instant of dawn which he saw, — a flush in the sky, a gray streak with stray beams of gold and purple, flashing hints of oncoming noontide. Such moments were visiting many souls at that juncture. Every gleam was prophetic. None could utter it; only sensitive spirits could feel it. The open Bible, — a new Europe!

He thought of Giovanni's coming to ask him again to

view the statue which the old classicist insisted he had obtained of a Greek sailor shipwrecked near.

"Here," said Vian, as he turned to his New Testament, and remembered how every stormy moment of experience and every hour of quiet meditation had gone into the very texture of the Greek language, — "here is something within Aristotle's language more philosophical than he. Here the glory of the tabernacle of the Jew shines through the Parthenon of the Greek. Here combine the two streams which have borne the greatest argosies of humanity, — those of head and heart. Let Giovanni grow frantic with rejoicing that he has secured of some hapless sailor a fragment of the Athens of Pericles! I will tell him that Athens was never so great as when Saint Paul looked around upon the dissolving civilization of Pericles, and made Greek culture glow with Christian significance. But I am a heretic; and I am drifting even from the Fathers of the Church, as I have long since drifted from Abbot Richard. Shall I pray? Nay; for I am not so far astray as was Saint Augustine. He said, 'Plato showed me the true God; Jesus Christ showed me the way to Him.' I have not drifted so far."

Poor, perplexed Vian, — a Christian amid the dazzling lights and deep shadows of the Renaissance, — a monk, a heretic, a Pythagorean!

Then he touched the volume again, as a sick man takes hold of a battery. "Oh, surely there is promise in this freed book! The Greek language waited to carry the new Iliad into the human soul."

Why did not Giovanni come? Vian thought little about him or classic Greece. On the ruins of classicalism he saw a new power rising. By and by it would be seen to include the prophetic energies of olden times. He could see distinctly but two things, — an open Bible and a new Europe.

How true was this vague, prophetic feeling! That new Europe was very near, and stretched afar. With this book as inspiration and resource, William Tyndale and Miles Coverdale were so to continue and complete the task of the Venerable Bede and John Wycliffe as to mark an epoch in the history of that language to be used by Shakspeare and Burke, — an era as distinct as that which Luther's Bible so soon should mark in the history of a language to be such a potent instrument in the hands of Goethe and Hegel. For this very act of heresy, Tyndale was to be called "a full-grown Wycliffe," and Luther "the redeemer of his mother-tongue." With the Bible Calvin was to conceive republics at Geneva, and Holbein to paint, in spite of the iconoclasm of the Reformation, the faces of Holy Mother and Saint, and in spite of the cruelty of the Church, scripturally conceived satires illustrating the sale of indulgences. With that book Gustavus Vasa was to protect and nurture the freedom of that land of flowing splendors, while Angelo was transcribing sacred scenes upon the Sistine Vault or fixing them in stone. Reading this book, More was to die with a smile; Latimer, Cranmer, and Ridley to perish while illuminating Europe with living torches, and the Anabaptist to arouse the sympathies of Christendom by his agonies. With this book in hand, Shakspeare was to write his plays; Raleigh to die, knight, discoverer, thinker, statesman, martyr; Bacon to lay the foundation of modern scientific research, — three stars in the majestic constellation about Henry's daughter. With this Bible open before them, the English nation would behold the Spanish Armada dashed to pieces upon the rocks, while Edmund Spenser mingled his delicious notes with the tumult of that awful wreck.

This book was to produce the Edict of Nantes, while John of Barneveldt would give new life to the command of William the Silent, — "Level the dikes; give Holland

back to the ocean, if need be," thus making preparation for the visit of the Mayflower Pilgrims to Leyden or Delfthaven. Their eyes resting upon its pages, Selden and Pym were to go to prison, while Grotius dreamed of the rights of man in peace and war, and Guido and Rubens were painting the joys of the manger or the sorrows of Calvary. His hand resting upon this book, Oliver Cromwell would consolidate the hopes and convictions of Puritanism into a sword which should conquer at Naseby, Marston Moor, and Dunbar, leave to the throne of Charles I. a headless corse, and create, if only for an hour's prophecy, a Commonwealth of unbending righteousness. With that volume in their homes, the Swede and the Huguenot, the Scotch-Irishman and the Quaker, the Dutchman and the freedom-loving Catholic were to plan pilgrimages to the West, and establish new homes in America. With that book in the cabin of the "Mayflower," venerated and obeyed by sea-tossed exiles, was to be born a compact from which should spring a constitution and a government for the life of which all these nationalities should willingly bleed and struggle, under a commander who should rise from the soil of the Cavaliers, and unsheath his sword in the colony of the Puritans.

Out of that Bible was to come the Petition of Right, the National Anthem of 1628, the Great Remonstrance, and Paradise Lost. With it Blake and Pascal should voyage heroically in diverse seas. In its influence, Harrington should write his "Oceana," Jeremy Taylor his "Liberty of Prophesying," Sir Matthew Hale his fearless replies, while Rembrandt was placing on canvas little Dutch children, with wooden shoes, crowding to the feet of a Jewish Messiah.

Its lines, breathing life, order, and freedom, would inspire John Bunyan's dream, Algernon Sidney's fatal republicanism, and Puffendorf's judicature. With them

William Penn would meet the Indian of the forest, and Fénelon the philosopher in his meditative solitude. Locke and Newton and Leibnitz would carry it with them in pathless fields of speculation, while Peter the Great was smiting an arrogant priest in Russia, and William was ascending the English throne. From its poetry Cowper, Wordsworth, Tennyson, and Browning would catch the divine afflatus; from its statesmanship Burke, Romilly, and Bright would learn how to create and redeem institutions; from its melodies Handel, Bach, Mendelssohn, and Beethoven would write oratorios, masses, and symphonies; from its declarations of divine sympathy Wilberforce, Howard, and Florence Nightingale were to emancipate slaves, reform prisons, and mitigate the cruelties of war; from its prophecies Dante's hope of a united Italy was to be realized by Cavour, Garibaldi, and Victor Emmanuel; and with her hand upon that book Victoria, England's coming queen, was to sum up her history as a power amid the nations of the earth, when, replying to the question of an ambassador, "What is the secret of England's superiority among the nations?" she would say, "Go tell your prince that *this* is the secret of England's political greatness."

Vian could not see, but he felt, the future.

CHAPTER XXIX.

VIAN THE PYTHAGOREAN.

Beware of Greek, lest you become a heretic. Fly from Hebrew, lest you become like Jews. — *Sixteenth Century Proverb.*

Somewhere, — in desolate wind-swept space, —
In twilight-land, — in no man's land,
Two hurrying shapes met face to face,
And bade each other stand.

"And who are you?" cried one agape,
Shuddering in the gloaming light.
"I know not," said the other shape;
"I only died last night."

ALDRICH.

WHILE in 1518 Raphael's unfinished masterpiece "The Transfiguration" was being borne along toward his grave by the mourning city of Rome, and Ami in France was beseeching Francis I. to deal wisely with the deputations of Parliament which came to Amboise to pray for the abolition of the Concordat, our disquieted monk in England was becoming more sure that the Almighty, if He had any serious intentions whatever concerning a soul which seemed doomed to be tempest-tossed, did not intend him to do Him service as an ecclesiastic at Glastonbury.

The hour had at last come when the abbot was willing to avow that he himself was thoroughly discouraged

with Vian. "He will never be Abbot of Glastonbury; he is not even an obedient monk," said he, regretfully. "I will, however, make one more effort to convince him."

In a brief hour one of the priors had seen Vian reading the words of Knighton, Wycliffe's antagonist.

"He was reading Master Knighton; and great was his attention to the wisdom of his words," said the prior, who always comforted the abbot with the most favorable view of any event.

"We have lost our pearl, as I fear, — our pearl is lost. Evil days are these!" and the abbot groaned with pain, as he pressed his heart.

These are the words which Vian read again and again: "The Scripture was given only to the clergy and doctors of the Church, that they might administer to laity and to weaker persons, according to the state of the times and the wants of man. But this Master John Wycliffe translated it out of Latin into the tongue Anglican — not Angelic! Thus it became of itself more vulgar, more open to the laity, and to women who could read than it usually is to the clergy, even the most learned and intelligent. In this way the Gospel-pearl is cast abroad and trodden under foot of swine; and that which was before precious both to clergy and to laity is rendered, as it were, the common jest of both."

When the prior returned to Vian's cell, he knew more of the kind of attention which had been bestowed upon those sentences which the abbot had placed in Vian's way.

The words of Master Knighton lay on the floor. Somebody had stepped upon them violently, and Vian was reading stealthily, but with unquestionable delight, a copy of one of the letters of Wycliffe in which the Reformer said, —

"Alas! alas! what cruelty is this, to rob a whole realm

of bodily food, because a few fools may be gluttons, and do harm to themselves and others by their food taken immoderately! As easily may a proud worldly priest err against the Gospel written in English. What reason is this, if a child fail in his lesson at the first day, to suffer never children to come to lessons for this default? Who would ever become a scholar by this process? What Antichrist is this who, to the shame of Christian men, dare to hinder the laity from learning this holy lesson which is so hard commanded by God? Each man is bound to do so, that he be saved; but each layman who shall be saved is a real priest made of God, and each man is bound to be a very priest."

Was the young monk Vian really interested in the thought that the Scriptures should be in everybody's hand? Yes; but he then looked upon them from an entirely different point of view than that which was occupied by the men who were slowly bringing it about. Vian's attitude was the intellectual attitude furnished to him by his Wycliffite blood, and yet greatly modified by the Renaissance. As a child of a Lollard, he could not help feeling the immense moral significance of the Gospels; as a child of the Renaissance, he did not see why any book should not have freedom of access to men's thought and lives. The same power which had objected to Plato and Cicero now opposed Saint Luke and Saint John. He would meet it in his soul with the same arguments, the soul of which was this conviction, — the human mind has the right to everything; nothing is too sacred, nothing is too secular. Philosophy had made "the soul" the centre of Vian's universe.

Shortly after the experience with which his vision-seeing mind had indulged itself in the presence of that copy of the Wycliffe translation, it had suffered, as such minds do, a marked relapse. This relapse of assurance as to the value of the Scriptures had not affected his in-

terest in them as remarkable chapters in the biography of human nature, and as disclosures of the Divine nature. It had, however, affected the feelings, which any most turbulent reformer would have shared, that they alone were to become the spiritual authority of mankind.

Thus far, not the Scriptures, but a vision of loveliness and beauty, — the picture of his soul's mate, — had been authoritative over his moral nature at critical moments. And it is true with every Vian now, as it was then, that whatever other excellent persons think or promulgate as the proper thing to be believed as to the authority of Scripture, the Bible has just as much authority as it has, and no more. Every man gets his working opinion as to the future experiences of men with a fact out of his own experiences with that fact.

The truth is that soon after that forelook, so vague yet so potent, which Vian had as he held that translation in his hand, the stubborn fact came into him that his own life had been kept true by his vision of that beautiful child of his boyhood fancy, who was now growing toward womanhood; and he clung to the Scriptures because they *found* him, as Coleridge says, at another point of his nature.

Was Vian's picture of truth and loveliness incarnate in the form of this imagined maiden, a hint of the necessity which we all feel for an Incarnation?

Is it not true, also, that until one sees in the Bible, the One who says, "I am the truth," the Bible, as the record of truth, has no absolute primary authority over him; and it only remains a collection of most interesting and most valuable leaves in the soul's biography?

Vian's intellectual interest in the Scriptures was now doubled, — for with others in the abbey, he had been studying, with Fra Giovanni, the philosophy of the Greeks; and Vian had enthusiastically embraced the Pythagorean ideas. These he believed were entirely harmonious with

what he knew of the Gospels, and especially, as we shall see, with the Epistles of Saint Paul.

The Italian monk's hairless pate appeared to shine with some of the light within his brain, when Fra Giovanni proceeded, amid the breathless interest of his students, to wheeze and to quote the sentences of Pythagoras and those of his disciple Plato. The asthma not often could conquer his enthusiasm as a teacher, — an enthusiasm not equalled in any other task he had attempted at Glastonbury, save that with which he pursued the abbot with a threat of opening the floodgates of scandal, and that with which he had succeeded in persuading the Renaissance monks that the whitewashed stone figure which he had contrived to obtain of a stone-cutter near the Cam was actually a fragment of Greek art of the age of Praxiteles.

As over and over again, this old sport in realms intellectual told Vian how the monks, who had arrogated to themselves the Greek spirit, stood at a safe distance and chattered in the happiness that they were at last beholding a statue of Demosthenes, when instead they were only looking at an ill-shapen figure of human mould which the half-witted stone-cutter had sold to Fra Giovanni for a spurious indulgence, and in his glee at having so completely fooled these wiseacres, the Italian would choke up; his nose, whose color had gained not a little of its ruddiness from the wine-cellar of the abbot, became almost purple, while he struggled with his ludicrous theme. This, however, was as nothing to the self-forgetting excitement with which he expounded those ideas of the transmigration of the soul and of the true nature of womankind, with the truth of which he saw Vian had soon become duly impressed.

The atmosphere which came with Fra Giovanni from the Italy which had already been transformed by the Renaissance was full of pollen, and the open soul of youthful England was ready to receive it.

Fra Giovanni was far from being a merely humorous old monk, who had worked his way to power by the eager use of the information which had reflected unpleasantly upon the abbot. His very humor had a basis of scholarship; and he could perfectly exhibit the affectation which he now saw those who were called the "Greeks" in England were beginning to practise.

Much of the history of the Italian Renaissance was at length repeating itself, even in the courts and abbeys of Britain. Even the imitation of the ancients was flagrant in the Ciceronians, whom Erasmus had ridiculed; and the liberal use of sentiments, names, and classical allusions in conversation had become a ridiculous travesty to the mind of the monk. Day by day he had observed here what Italy had experienced; namely, a slavish emulation of Greek or Roman thought. Again did the world see the saints of the calendar go unconsulted in the naming of a child; and instead of Ambrose came Achilles; instead of Ruth, Atalanta; instead of Paul, Hector. Giovanni amused himself by begging to be called Jovianus; and he listened as he smiled at the mention of Pierius for Peter, as once he had heard the Italian Gianpaolo called Janus Parhasius. Architecture was looking backward in Vian's mind, as he still talked with the abbot, — backward even to the Roman Basilicæ, where Christianity was born. Erasmus had listened to a sermon in Italy, which now did not seem so remarkable, because in talk and public speech God Almighty was often called Jove; His son Jesus, Apollo; and Mary, the mother of God, Diana. The genius of Thomas More was writing an epigram in which Cæsar and the Nervii change places with Henry VIII. and the French, while, as before in Italy, Curtius or Cecrops or Iphigenia was useful to illustrate the power of that divine passion which issued in the death of Christ. Cardinal Wolsey was called an augur; and the nuns of Mynchin

Buckland were denominated Vestals by the little knot of "Greeks" at Glastonbury. The hymnologists knew more of Parnassus than of Calvary; and the valley of the shadow of death of the Psalmist gave place to Tartarus and Acheron.

"Now," said the paganism of Giovanni, "is the time to spread Pythagorean ideas, when Cardinal Wolsey will recreate the palace of Lorenzo de' Medici at Hampton."

Giovanni was to be disappointed in the luxurious cardinal, who was to be a statesman almost in spite of his tastes; but in Vian he was not to be disappointed. Not many months had gone by until the special features of this philosophy which interested Giovanni had a new champion.

"Why," said Vian to the sub-prior one day, as they walked toward the cloisters, "the doctrine that the soul has had a previous existence, and is on its way through this existence to others, is the only doctrine which will account for some of those memories which come up out of some past and steal like clouds over the mind's sky."

"You have got even Giovanni's wheeze, Vian! By all the saints, I did not know that your description had come to this," said the sub-prior, with an effort at being caustic.

"Yes," lanquidly replied Vian; "I suppose I shall catch bald-headedness too. Fra Giovanni has wonderful powers of inoculation. His logic confounds me. Bald-headedness is a fact. The transmigration of souls is a fact. I am amenable to facts; but I must not — " and then Vian, seeing that he had plunged into logical or illogical quagmires, out of which his fresh philosophic possessions would hardly extricate him, added with a deeper voice: "I do not know enough truth yet to manage the errors which beset me. But I cannot see that, on the principles of Giovanni's logic, I can avoid being bald-headed — "

"And being asthmatic," said the sub-prior, laughing; "but what about your own soul, Vian?"

"I would rather talk about that," said the new-fledged Pythagorean, who with the usual audacity of a young philosopher willingly attacked the most serious problems, in order perhaps that he might escape the primary difficulties. "I know that I must have lived somewhere before this life began."

"How did you get here?" asked the sub-prior.

"My death out of the last life was my birth into this life. My death out of this life will be my birth into the next," answered Vian. "You have read Ovid's poem on our old master Pythagoras?"

"No."

"Well," and Vian stood up in the sunlight as it came flooding in upon the cloisters, "I will recite some lines which Fra Giovanni read to us yesterday from Ovid, —

> 'Death, so called, is but old matter
> In some new form. And in a varied vest
> From tenement to tenement, though tossed,
> The soul is still the same, the figure only lost;
> And as the softened wax new seals receives.
> Its face assumes, and that impression leaves,
> Now called by one, now by another name,
> The form is only changed, the wax the same.
> Then, to be born is to begin to be
> Some other thing we were not formerly.
> The forms are changed, I grant; that nothing can
> Continue in the figure it began.'"

"You mean to tell me," inquired the sub-prior, "that men of sense in ancient times did actually believe such stuff? This must have an end."

"Certainly!" said Vian, assuming a grandiose air, and fearing nothing, now that the abbot was at Parliament. "Men of sense now believe the truth that the soul has transmigrated and will transmigrate. They believe it just as did Pythagoras and Plato and Plotinus."

"Oh, philosophers, all of them, Vian, — hair-brained men!"

"Ah," added Vian, with warmth, "Virgil and Ovid believed it."

"Poets, poets! Philosophers are poets who write fables in prose, and poets are philosophers who write fables in verse."

"Cæsar was a hard-headed fellow, was he not?"

"He did not believe in it."

"Perhaps not; but he found that the Gauls did believe it, and all our forefathers in Britain as well."

"The whole crowd which you mention was a crowd of heathen."

Vian's authorities had not been so satisfactory even to himself as he could have desired, until he had begun to read again his Wycliffe translation of the New Testament.

With the same facility with which thousands since his day have read their creeds into a book, most of which they easily toss aside if need be, had this ambitious expositor handled the Gospels and Epistles. He was fresh from his labors in that direction; and now he proposed to overwhelm the sub-prior with authorities which such an ardent Churchman could not resist.

"The Scriptures themselves proclaim it. Do not let this assertion of mine take your breath!" said Vian.

"I do not wonder that Fra Giovanni finds his breath short in teaching such profanity," remarked the sub-prior, whose face was beclouded. "But proceed! I shall not be amazed at anything now. I was with you once at Cambridge. We heard strange doctrines there; but Erasmus never dreamed of this."

"I will proceed," said Vian. "When at the Augustinian Monastery the other day, you and I heard them teach that all men sinned in Adam, and are guilty of Adam's transgression — "

"That is no more Augustine," said the sub-prior, "than it is Saint Paul; for Saint Paul says, 'All have sinned.'"

"Yes," interrupted Vian, "even so; but how could you have sinned in Adam if you were not there?"

The sub-prior shook his head, but it was the movement of an unconverted head.

"Then," said Vian, "then all sin which is so active within us now is from an older life. That is 'the man of sin.' Saint Paul himself tells us of his conflict, — the war between the one man and the other in him; the old man and the new. You remember 'the old man' and 'the new man' in Saint Paul?"

"Which man is Saint Paul?"

"Why," said the startled Pythagorean, who now saw that he had one man too many on his hands, — "why, Saint Paul had lived before this life. He had —"

The sub-prior took courage at Vian's evident perplexity, and broke forth again with the old effort at being caustic: "There may be four Saint Pauls in his next life, if this multiplication keeps up. Oh, nonsense, Vian!"

"Wiser Churchmen than you have accepted and preached this truth," said Vian smartly, gaining his feet. "Origen —"

"He was heretical."

"So is every man who is greater than the commonplace men about him."

"Well, who else?" inquired the sub-prior, complacently.

"Philo himself said that the soul had lost its heavenly home, and come down to the earthly body as to a strange place. Clement of Alexandria and Porphyry found the doctrine in Saint Paul."

"Porphyry has no authority at Glastonbury," said the dignified sub-prior.

"Well," inquired the disturbed Vian, "who has?"

"Ah, Vian, *you* have! You have assumed it over your own mind. This," — and now the sub-prior assumed the august importance of a defender of the faith, — "this is all the upshot of this disobeying, free-thinking tendency which Erasmus himself has started, and which John Colet and Thomas More, — God be thanked, Thomas More now sees the error! — this is all of it the result of what they have encouraged in England. Germany is alive with heresy."

"Why," said the surprised Vian, "you have lost ground, since you read the Greek poets so delightedly in secret!"

"I have found the ends of some of these perilous roads which I have been travelling with men who ought to have known better; I see now what the outcome of all this will be. As I said, the air of Germany is poison itself. We can have no Holy Church at all, if this keeps up. That monk Luther — "

"I do not like the turbulent fellow. I understand he does not like Erasmus or his New Testament."

"Well, turbulent or calm, any man who protests now is simply starting a revolution which will end by making every man his own guide and priest. The protesters do not agree; they will protest against one another, and there will be no Church at all. Vian, you have wit enough to see in what direction things are going."

Vian had thought of all this; and lover of order, admirer of power as he was, seeing also, as he did from a merely intellectual point of view, the necessity for some kind of an organization which should hold society together, he had often been disturbed at the disorganizing tendencies of some of these movements.

But for the present he was under the dominion of another idea. His moral life had never felt the touch of the Church, and he seemed to be within touch of an idea which might league itself somehow with that

vision of his soul's mate, and help him to solve practical problems.

He said: "But what has all that to do with the truth or untruth of the doctrine of Pythagoras? If the Scriptures teach it," — and now to Vian's somewhat refreshed mind the Scriptures *did* teach it, — "why should you ask any questions?"

"Who interprets the Scriptures?" asked this authority of the Church. "You do for yourself. There is the assumption of your individual mind again, Vian, — the curse these protesters will bring upon us!"

"Well," said Vian, "what do you do with such a Scripture as this: 'Who hath chosen us before the foundation of the world'? Origen himself could not be heretical enough to take the truth out of it. We were somewhere when God made His choice of us. And then there is this Scripture: 'If ye will receive it, this is Elias which was for to come.' That is the word of Jesus Christ himself about the man whom men knew at that time as John the Baptist. Even John did not deny the assertion that he was Elijah re-incarnated. Jesus said: 'Before Abraham was, I am.'"

The sub-prior was now the perplexed one. "I have always been unable to understand those texts," said he, with evident honesty.

"They are no more hard to the mind than are the experiences of such a soul as yours," said Vian, adding to the sub-prior's perplexities by summoning more difficulties to his overwhelming.

"What do you mean?"

They had strolled together beyond the chapel, and were looking over the Avalonian hills.

"We certainly come into the world with more than ourselves," continued Vian. "There is a treasured up amount of experience which we have had somewhere else to begin this life with. Then the new experience which

we have here, — some of it we can attach to the old, some of it we cannot. What we are to-day and what we see to-day are determined in no little measure by what we brought out of the other life. 'To him that hath shall be given; to him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.' Have you never had dreams?"

"In daytime?"

"Yes; dreams of old places and beautiful skies, or of sorrows which you could not have had here, — perhaps also of love?"

"Ah, Vian, you have touched me now. I have had memories which I could not obliterate nor quicken into definite experiences. Sometimes I feel that I am very old, very old. Then I remember a youth which was far away, and then some one else whose life I have lived seems to be speaking. I do not dare to go to certain cells in the abbey, because there I have felt that I may meet an old self. I know there are songs I have not heard here which I must have heard elsewhere; and, Vian, you know I am not carnally minded, but I have prayed to be delivered from kisses which seem to float to my lips from some sweet past. Is this what you mean?"

"Precisely," said Vian, who looked at the somewhat shrunken and dry lips, and immediately pitied the sub-prior because he was not a Pythagorean. "But, now, how is it that you do not fear the effect of this reliance upon your individual experience in this controversy? You are as bad as any protester in your assertion of the authority of the individual. On the matter of your own experience, then," added he, tauntingly, "*you* are authority."

The sub-prior's head was full of another set of problems. Vian saw it, and went on to say: "Why, Pythagoras, our master, remembered his previous existences.

He was a herald once, named Æthalides; then a Trojan called Euphorbus. No wonder that you dread the old cell, if as a monk you did any such thing as dream of loving anybody in that other life, — for it is real; this memory is true. Pythagoras found in the temple of Juno at Argos the very shield with which, when he was Euphorbus in the Trojan War, he had attacked Patroclus."

The sub-prior was beginning to be annoyed with the names of people of whom he had never heard, and like a swimmer in strange seas, he anxiously paddled back where the water was no less deep, even if the shore was more familiar.

"But," said he, as an assembly of carrion crows wheeled about in the upper distances and slowly found a path unseen through the purple haze to some carcass hidden amid the little trees, — "but the souls of men then transmigrate into the birds or beasts which at death or birth they most resemble."

"Those," said Vian, pointing to the fading specks in the sky, "are souls in penitential agony. They are the spirits of lovers of scandal. They have to content their gross appetites on decaying animals now; they used to content themselves on the simple prospect of a decaying character. Poor things!" Then Vian quietly quoted Ovid again: —

> "Souls cannot die. They leave a former home,
> And in new bodies dwell, and from them roam.
> Nothing can perish, all things change below;
> For spirits through all forms may come and go.
> Good beasts shall rise to human forms, and men,
> If bad, shall backward turn to beasts again.
> Thus through a thousand shapes the soul may go,
> And thus fulfil its destiny below."

The sub-prior was silent for a moment, and then he said with feeling, "Well, I should be glad to find some philosophy which would give us a new chance;" and he

added, "But this is very fascinating," as he hurried away to attend to duties now too long postponed.

It was now Vian's turn to be honest with his most remote doubt; for two certain reflections had annoyed him. "But," said he, "if I have only two rocks against which I may perhaps go to pieces, that is a smaller number of perils than I ever confronted before; and if these two rocks are far enough apart, I may be able to sail between them."

The one difficulty concerned itself with the reverence and worship which Vian had hitherto given to the Holy Virgin. How could he still look with prayerful awe upon her lovely Majesty, and still hold that every woman was but some man who had sinned in some previous existence, and had thus suffered retribution? Just this idea even the greatest of Pythagoreans had hinted at as the explanation of the fact of womankind.

The other difficulty was of the same sort, — both were rocks whose bases met beneath a shallow sea. It concerned itself with that vision, — the dream picture of his childhood.

The mate of his soul whom he had met so often in vision, in spite of Abbot Richard and the penances, had now grown almost to fancied womanhood. Still she remained, — the one ideal of his spirit, the inspiration and guide of his life. Often he seemed to hear her voice or to feel the glorious presence near.

Still, if she lived anywhere, she was a woman!

He had come to look upon her as some one whom he had known in some other life, so thoroughly had she possessed his mind and heart in this life. Hardly had Vian thus accounted for the powerful influence of this exquisite dream upon him by certain principles of Pythagoreanism, until he was assured, by certain other principles of that philosophy as Giovanni understood it, that the picture itself was of saddest sig-

nificance. His darling was growing up in his soul to be a *woman!*

That meant of course that she had been a man in some other life, and had sinned. It seemed incredible to his brain and cruel to his heart.

"Oh, if only we could take portions of these philosophies and creeds, and believe them, life would be tolerable," cried Vian, as he sought sleep that night in vain.

CHAPTER XXX.

A CALL UPON THE CARDINAL.

"Cloth of gold do not despise,
Though thou match with cloth of frieze;
Cloth of frieze, be not too bold,
Though thou match with cloth of gold."

AT the hour, in 1517, when the Lateran Council concluded its tasks, the city of Rome appeared again to be as it had been in the days of Cæsar, — the centre of the world; and the Pope was the governing soul of all. But religious Cæsarism had now had its brightest days. The seven hills of Rome no longer had room for the diversified interests of man. The centre of the world was elsewhere. Even spiritual monarchy no longer governed absolutely.

Barefooted Leo X., in a procession which repeated the prayers newly set up in all the churches, saw, or thought he saw, rising at his desire, a world-wide crusade against the Turk. In his fancy, the Emperor of the Germans was already crossing the Danube; Henry VIII. and Francis I. were sailing together, united at last with his Holiness, as their ships swept over the Mediterranean toward a conquest of Constantinople. Everything seemed leagued against the Turk. Cardinal legates had been sent to the courts of Europe; and a five years' truce had been proclaimed.

If Leo X. had looked westward before his eyes had been dazzled by a sun which so rapidly was leaving the East, he would have seen the advancing of long lines of purple and gray and gold, which would have told him that the true crusader, following after Columbus, would move in a direction entirely opposite to this churchly goal, and that in Wittenberg was a single-handed monk whom he must consult before there could be a common cause worth the attention of Christian princes. True, the Greek scholars who were exiled from Constantinople in 1453, had fired the soul of the Pope with an enthusiasm against the Turk which no other Pope had known. But they had initiated a westward march. Leo X. was also in many regards the general in control of the forces of the Renaissance. He saw that it was possible to recover the Parthenon, perhaps also the manuscripts of Homer and Hesiod and Æschylus, as well as the grave of the Christ; for which recovery other crusades had set out. What though as yet Christendom did not share his admiration for such spoils as the statues of Praxiteles or the decorations of the Temple of Athene! Still would Europe see to it that the Turk was beaten back; and with it all, he would fill the splendor of the unfinished St. Peter's with the choicest of the glories of ancient Greece. It was, in most respects, a worthy dream. But even Greek ideas had been making other visions in the human mind, which were to league themselves with a movement that Leo X. had scarcely stopped to respect.

Said Erasmus: "I wish that even the weakest woman might read the Gospels and the Epistles of Saint Paul. But the first step to their being read is to make them intelligible to the reader. I long for the day when the husbandman shall sing portions of them to himself as he follows the plough, when the weaver shall hum them to the tune of his shuttle, when the traveller shall while away with their stories the weariness of his journey."

In 1516 the New Testament of Erasmus had been printed; and even Bishop Fox had remarked, "It is as good as ten commentaries." The Renaissance had again robed itself as a reformation.

But naturally enough did Leo X., Henry VIII., Charles of Austria, and Francis I. soon turn from such an event as the printing of a book, to the question as to which one of these earthly sovereigns should succeed to a throne made vacant by the death of Maximilian, in January, 1519. Leo's idea of a crusade had long before this been shattered. Wolsey had so treated Cardinal Campeggio, who was sent to England as papal legate, as to leave no doubt in the mind of his Holiness that England and Henry VIII. at present proposed to offer no obsequious respect to Rome. The marriage which the Pope had arranged, whereby Francis I. was to have been attached to the papal see, had eventuated in another. Charles was too powerful in Italy to please the Pope, as a candidate for Charlemagne's throne; and Henry VIII. looked on through the scheming eyes of Cardinal Wolsey as Francis I. offered abundant gold and brilliant promises, writing to his great rival these words: "Two lovers are we, wooing the same mistress; and whichever she may choose, should be looked upon with no envy by his fellow-contestant."

Ami sat at Amboise with Astrée, rehearsing to her the objections which he had urged upon his sovereign against this course, telling her, as her dark eyes looked into his restless soul, how impossible such an ambition was of fulfilment, and assuring her who at that hour loved him more than all the prospective emperors of earth, that Cardinal Wolsey was so managing affairs that the new emperor and Francis I. should seem to be foes.

Back came the four hundred German lanzknechts and Admiral Bonnivet, who looked more stupid than ever to Ami, as the admiral stood, without his four hundred

thousand crowns, to tell Francis I. how he promised Cardinal Wolsey fourteen votes for the papal chair in vain, how the wily cardinal quietly aided the nephew of Katherine of Arragon his queen, and how Charles was elected king of the Romans.

In England, at that moment, Bishop Fox and Thomas More were both bewailing the absence of Erasmus, whom Wolsey had offended by offering him only a prebend at Tournay; and Henry VIII. remarked that he had promised himself that he would not remove his beard until he had met the King of France, and that Francis I. had said, "I protest I will never put mine off until I have seen the King of England."

"All things," again said Pace, "are full of deceit, 'et Judas non dormit.'"

In the early evening of September 6, 1519, Abbot Richard Beere of Glastonbury, riding on Wolsey's mule, which his Eminence had sent to London for his use, looked restively from the river Thames on his right, over the elm-trees which shaded the slight undulation at his left, as he approached that impressive collection of cloisters, turrets, parapets, lattices, and red brick walls known as Hampton Court. Long lines of wood flanked the stream at intervals; and in and out flew the fly-catchers. The brook-wagtails were wading over the gravel near the edge of the stream, as it reappeared to his view; and early as it was for him, now and then a jacksnipe fastened the attention of the tree-creepers which looked down upon him from the branches above the oozy bogs. On the other side, in a small patch of scrubby heath and gorse, hedge-sparrows and black buntings were flitting about. The reeds in the stream were unmoved with the soft fading summer breath which was vanishing before the autumn; and the low hum of insects round about the bushes which hung over and dipped into the stream, seemed perfectly harmonious with a silent farewell which

was breathing itself out of the ample sky to the summer time.

The mule had been jogging on easily, until the abbot saw before him the red glory of the cardinal's garden, luxuriant in that early autumn day, whereat he compelled the animal to slacken his pace, and turning to look upon the willows fringing the stream, the hedgerows extending far beyond the mighty oaks which appeared as the symbol of power, he said, —

"Even Nature herself is magnificent in the presence of such a magnificent person. Here," added the antiquarian soul of Abbot Richard, "where the Hospitallers of St. John were abolished, comes this our cardinal, eight stout oarsmen rowing him down the river Thames from Whitehall, to show all Churchmen how to live in splendor."

It had been a perplexing day for the cardinal at Westminister Hall; but to the astonishment of the abbot, he was ushered in at once, and found himself again before Thomas Wolsey, who just now had pushed aside considerations from Whitehall, the college at Oxford, foreign ambassadors, despatches from his agents everywhere, and even Henry VIII., to give some directions concerning the paling which was to divide the parks, and the color for the bricks of the buttressed wall.

Gloomy as had been the mind of Abbot Richard, as he thought of parting with Vian, the hour had come when he was a burden at Glastonbury; and the soul of his old friend believed that so marked and various were his talents that only such a leader as Wolsey could command them all. Richard Beere knew the cardinal so well that he never feared that Vian's heresies would annoy him, or block up the path to the young man's advancement. The abbot was an ecclesiastic always, sometimes a politician; Wolsey was always a politician, and sometimes an ecclesiastic.

"Others may not surround their houses and gardens with a moat," said the cardinal. "It is a custom quite sure to die; but so also the custom, if so it may be called, of asking one such as I am to such perilous tasks, — that will die. I however shall defend myself."

Abbot Richard was never so impressed by his own admirable self-command.

Together they looked with Master Laurence Stubbes at the plans for the ornamentation of the palace. The abbot was amazed. He had seen Wolsey in public, and he remembered the magnificence; but such private splendor surpassed his fancy.

In the morning there was but one topic. Over and over again did they talk of Vian's acquaintance with architecture, of his rare good sense and his exquisite taste. Of his learning, virtue, and force of mind, Wolsey had informed himself at a previous time.

Public business was pressing; and Wolsey, having spoken the word which made Vian his servant, dismissed the abbot with his affectionate farewell.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE FIELD OF THE CLOTH OF GOLD.

"Good friends, French and English."

APPEARING like a vague but shining certainty for many months before the minds of French and English statesmen and politicians, was the proposed interview between the two sovereigns, which at length was to leave only a fairy page in the record of pageantry, and to be known as the "Field of the Cloth of Gold."

To the amazement of Wolsey, Vian, who had always hitherto appeared interested in grave and significant things, proved himself, in the discussions of plans, ceremonials, and proposed buildings, to be the only man of his acquaintance able to conceive and execute a scheme which would worthily attest the seeming importance of this royal interview. He had learned enough of architecture at Glastonbury, where Richard Beere was splendidly memorializing his own faith in the Holy Church, to confound the architects about Hampton Court and Whitehall with questions which they could not answer, and plans which they did not comprehend. He was, for so young a man, a master of French as well as of English history; and he united to Wolsey's love of pomp and circumstance his own interest in the proper arrangement of shields and banners.

He was unable to hold his own place, in such a business, in one realm alone. Knighthood he did not know, save in the translation of the "Gests of King Arthur" and in "Froissart." This, under the circumstances, however, did not trouble him.

"As to the lists, arming and barbing of steeds, arranging of combatants, and conduct of the jousts," said Vian one day, in the presence of the luxurious Sir Richard Wingfield, ambassador to France, who had been appointed to succeed the niggardly Sir Thomas Boleyn, "I am assured that I may trust entirely to the young knight of the French Court who has all those matters in charge. He is a favorite of Bayard; and he is a scholar as well as a knight."

The courtly Sir Richard bowed his head in assent, and added: "A wonderful man is he. He is beloved by Francis I. as is no other man in his kingdom. Indeed, it is said in France, that it was by a wise word of the young knight that the king saved himself at Marignano. His Holiness has presented him with a jewel; and his heart is with a maiden within the French court."

Vian listened attentively to this remark, and forgot it not when the 4th of June came.

Interminably long and complex seemed the necessary preparations for this magnificent interview. Probably history records no such prodigal expenditure of color and sound for so little value received. Of Francis I. and Henry VIII. it must be said, that each was a luxurious monarch who hoped to impress the other with his resources and magnificence. Wolsey, who had been appointed proctor by both kings, was conscious of an ambition to outshine every rival in Church and State. As he blunderingly talked over the precedents of chivalry with Vian, his eyes brightened, and he was pleased beyond measure at recitals of silk, tapestries, and glittering arms. The time itself, as we have seen, breathed such ostenta-

tious competition in the minds of sovereigns. The fancy of the age burst forth in one last glowing eulogy of decaying chivalry; and in the presence of ideals which it did not comprehend or discern, it luxuriantly decorated the dissolving dream of ancient pageantry.

"The young knight, Ami Perrin, — is that the name? — he must not be allowed to outrival us in splendor," said the cardinal.

"Sir Richard has his ear close to the zealous courtier," replied Vian; "and Sir Richard, for England's honor, tells me all. Like the King of France himself, his trusted soldier seems courteous and consenting. I like the knight Ami."

"Courteous and consenting, Vian? Let him, then, arrange with his sovereign Francis I. for a longer prorogation of the interview, in order that we may bring to a happy conclusion our communication with Emperor Charles V.," said Wolsey, who had begun to trust Vian with all State secrets, and who especially desired to talk over the possibility of making an alliance between Henry VIII. and the emperor.

Queen Katherine herself, the emperor's aunt, did not more truly desire to postpone the interview with the French monarch than did Wolsey. But even Wolsey's sickness in April could not stand in the way. The neglected and unseemly fields — Guisnes and Ardres — must be cleared up, and the tedious romance enacted.

Up to the very day of the interview, rumors ran from court to court, threatening to set all preparations at nought.

Summoned at once, on his arrival in England, into the presence of Wolsey, Vian was confronted by the report that amid the duplicities of Wolsey himself, the cardinal had detected the French monarch engaged in operating a plan dishonorable and crafty.

"Tell me," said the angry cardinal, "are large

bodies of men, armed and belligerent, secretly hid in the field?"

"By the honor of the young knight whom I trust, I say to your eminence, Nay!" answered Vian.

"Why do you not swear by the honor of Francis I., King of France?" inquired his Grace.

"He has none," answered Vian.

"By your own honor, swear!"

"I have already promised you, my Lord Cardinal, that all shall be well. My promise is my oath."

The cardinal extended his hand, and Vian kissed it. The fact is that Vian had, ten days before, for the first time met the young knight in close and earnest debate on this delicate subject. On that occasion Ami, with whom Vian's official relation to the proposed interview had brought him into intimate association, had proved himself a knight indeed. The report to which Wolsey alluded had produced its effect upon Vian; and the busy notes of labor, as it wove the subtle melodies of color upon the field of Guisnes, were stopped suddenly, when he was informed that twelve large vessels had been equipped by the French King. English monk and French knight stood opposed for an hour in such a manner as to make Sir Richard Wingfield and Admiral Bonnivet, who depended upon the young knight Ami as did Cardinal Wolsey upon the young monk Vian, tremble for the result. After the hot words and mutual concessions to courtesy, Ami produced assurances signed and sealed by Francis I., and Sir Richard agreed to forward them to Wolsey at Hampton Court. No one rejoiced more heartily in the vanishing of the clouds than Francis I.

Charles V., who had been for a time in Spain, was now nearer than ever to the ear of Wolsey. "The emperor," said the knight to the monk, "does not mean that our sovereigns shall negotiate with friendliness, or arrange their affairs in love."

"Not seven thousand ducats as a pension, nor two Spanish bishoprics, can shake the desire of my Lord Cardinal for the interview between their Majesties," answered the monk.

The knight smiled; and Vian saw that Ami had as much faith in the honor of the English Cardinal as he himself had in that of the French Sovereign.

Charles V. was not to be circumvented. May 26 came; and Vian handed to his Majesty at Canterbury, at which place the English monarch had stopped on his way to the place of embarkation, the information that the Emperor Charles V. and his fleet had arrived at the port of Hythe.

"Politics and ecclesiastics are much alike," said the audacious Vian to Cardinal Wolsey, "especially when the Pope is concerned in both."

"The loftiest place in politics," replied the wary cardinal, "is an ecclesiastical one; and the most important position in ecclesiastics is a political one."

The papal chair seemed again to rise like a possible possession before the eye of Wolsey the Chancellor; and unconsciously his sovereign, Henry VIII., was already in training for the headship of the English Church. In after years Wolsey's remark appeared to Vian to have been another unnoticed testimony to his incomparable genius.

Before a week had gone, Henry VIII. and Charles V. had repaired together to the cathedral at Canterbury, stood lovingly before the bones of Saint Thomas à Becket, and arranged their affairs so unanimously that the King of the Germans and Spaniards had no fear of Francis I. Even Cardinal Wolsey could now enjoy the galas of the "Field of the Cloth of Gold," as he should muse on the promise of Charles the Emperor, that he would help him to the papacy.

Conscious that if any two of the three young sovereigns

of Europe should enter into offensive and defensive alliance against him, the third would be conquered, each one of the sovereigns themselves, the Pope at Rome, and above all, Italy, galled by the Austrian yoke, knew the significance of any union of the houses of Valois and Tudor. Charles V. had anticipated fate. While the young French knight was congratulating the English monk, on May 30, that their task as servants of the two courts was so happily concluded to the spoiling of the plans of Charles V., that calculating monarch was rejoicing over his bloodless victory at Canterbury, as he said to his quieted soul, —

"It is well that the brilliant pageant about to occur at Guisnes has been already transformed into a gorgeous farce. The alliance of the lilies of France with the leopards of England would be equal to the dismemberment of half our empire."

Did the masterful monarch perceive that the battle of Pavia was just ahead?

The day for the interview dawned over that arid plain which, by the intelligence and skill of Vian and Ami, instructed and emboldened as they were by Cardinal Wolsey and Admiral Bonnivet, had been transformed into a gigantic dream of unparalleled magnificence.

> "Men might say,
> Till this time pomp was single; but now married
> To one above itself. Each following day
> Became the next day's master, till the last
> Made former wonders its. To-day the French,
> All clinquant, all in gold, like heathen gods,
> Shone down the English; and to-morrow they
> Made Britain India: every man that stood,
> Showed like a mine."

Amid it all, however, there were two men to whom life's realities had become so identified with struggles — one a struggle of the intellect toward freedom, the other a struggle of conscience toward purity — that whatever

else men might lose or gain, for contemporary politics or personal glory, they were predetermined, by the fatality of significant circumstances, to find each for himself, on the "Field of the Cloth of Gold," an important date, a memorable milestone. These were the English monk and the French knight.

Francis I. of France already, as we have seen, had learned to find his happiest moments in the society, not of his queen, but rather in that of Mme. de Chateaubriand. Life was richest and poorest, as he walked with this favorite in the gardens of the Tuileries, or gayly rowed with her over the smooth Seine. In vain had the king sought to make Ami's love for Astrée a cloak for royal iniquity. He had used everything else but Ami's conscience. But in vain, also, did the knight seek to render his sovereign's court at Guisnes irreproachable by the absence of this favorite, or at least by her wise acquiescence in arrangements which would not humiliate the neglected Queen Claude in the presence of Katherine, who up to that hour had kept the love of her royal husband, Henry VIII. Mme. de Chateaubriand had trampled in more serious ways upon Ami's sagacious counsels to Francis I. She was for war with Charles V. So, also, was Louise of Savoy. One held this position because of her ambition for a commonplace brother; the other, because of her ambition for a royal son.

Never had the favorite's plans come so near to Ami's heart with a wound as now. The prudent knight was deeply pained, when, on the arrival of the French court from the capital, he perceived in the midst of the court-ladies his own Astrée, compelled by the king to appear at the side of Mme. de Chateaubriand. Rage took possession, for a moment, of Ami's heart and hand. But he was a knight and a lover. Instantly, as he beheld Astrée's innocence, his soul was melted from stern and sharp opposition into affectionate welcome and joy.

"Surely," thought he, "the reins of political power are no longer mine to hold; but my love shall be mine own, though every ceremony fail and the pageant fade away."

He had been more than anxious that some of the words which the monk Vian had recently said to him might be spoken in the hearing of Astrée. He was fully conscious, as Vian had told him of his life at Glastonbury and of the growth of the Reformation ideal in England, that, in circumstances which often threatened to overwhelm them, each was fighting a distinct battle against a common foe. The old knighthood had gone, and the new knighthood had desired a kind of purity which the Church did not foster. The old monastic scholarship had also departed, and "the new learning" was treated by the Holy Church with tortures or with contempt. He was also aware that each was making a desperate attempt to keep in hearty loyalty to the institution itself. Neither, as yet, had conceived it possible for the world to exist without an authoritative Church.

They had even talked over the event of Wittenberg, — ninety-five theses posted on the gate of the castle church, October 31, nearly three years before! Vian had confided to Ami the secret that Wolsey had besought him, who had so little genuine faith in the Holy Church, to assist his sovereign Henry VIII., who had even less faith in the popes and bishops at Rome, in the completion of a book against the heresy of Luther, — a work which Henry VIII. had meditated at least since June, 1518, and of which he had written to Pace, his secretary, — a work which the cardinal thought wretchedly incomplete, until some more learned man than the king should supply its defects in the history of the sacraments.

"It is yet undone," said Vian; "but when amity is restored between the sovereigns, we shall behold a king attending to a captious monk."

Ami replied, "Perhaps there are more of such monks than of such kings."

As he spoke, he was consumed with the old protesting fire with which he, a child of a Waldensian, looked so deeply into the soul of a Wycliffite's son.

CHAPTER XXXII.

JEALOUSY AND MAGNIFICENCE.

Their dwarfish pages were
As cherubins all gilt; the madames too,
Not used to toil, did almost sweat to bear
The pride upon them, that their very labor
Was to them as a painting; now this mask
Was cried incomparable; and the ensuing night
Made it a fool and beggar. The two kings,
Equal in lustre, were now best, now worst,
As presence did present them, — him in eye
Still him in praise, and being present both
'T was said they saw but one, and no discerner
Durst wag his tongue in censure. When these suns
(For so they phrase them) by their heralds challenged
The noble spirits to arms, they did perform
Beyond thought's compass.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE events of which history has preserved many descriptions, at length commanded laborious attention.

Vian had exhausted the lore of precedents as to buildings and banners; Ami had taxed his learning concerning chivalry and royal ceremonial. One had his mind full of altar-cloths, vestments, images, jewels, and names of church dignitaries; the other's intellect was crowded with visions of lances, doublets, bows and arrows, crests, troops of cavalry, heralds and pursuivants, and the names of the princes of the blood.

At length Wolsey, attended by a shining retinue, with solemn magnificence rode over two leagues, toward the tents and pavilions which, with ornamentation of gold and silver, had been fitted up with halls, galleries, and chambers, outside the walls of Ardres, as the lodgings of the French. As he saw the gilt figure of Saint Michael, mantled with blue, holding a fiery dart and bearing the emblazoned shield of France, he said to Vian, —

"Our French cousins have great art in them, Vian, but they know not all the arts of politics."

The monk made response by silence. He then knew that he had loaned his abilities to the creation of a phantasm.

No one of the fifty gentlemen of the household, who, with bonnets in hand, sat resplendent with golden chains on velvet-clothed horses, heard the remark. The huge gold maces and the shining pole-axes trembled not, nor did the vast crucifix of gold and gems tax unduly the hooded and crimson-robed cross-bearer, who, with the lackeys following beneath waving plumes, still believed in the sincerity of the skilful and magnificent Wolsey.

He was riding behind them, looking out from beneath his red hat, whose tassels fell about his face and hid his calm and arrogant eye, his imperious and regnant lips, his determined and commanding jaw. His very trusty mule was so covered with gold and color as to rival in splendor even the bishops and archers who, with the grand prior of Jerusalem, made up his train.

"Ah!" thought Vian, "the human soul is loaded down with trappings of another age. What if they be gold, if yet they enslave!"

As Vian helped the cardinal to dismount, Ami, in obedience to Bonnivet, ordered the discharge of artillery, which with its incessant roar was thundering amid drums and blaring trumpets. The tumult drowned the soft and affectionate tones in which the King of France,

bonnet in hand, received the accredited representative of the English throne.

At the departure of the Lord Cardinal, Vian, who remained with Ami to further some arrangements as to the visit of ceremony which on the next day was to be paid by the French, found himself in the presence of ladies whose dresses were, in his eyes, only as rich as they were immodest. Pearls and gold vied with color and the rarer gems to enrich the velvets and silks in which these courtly dames of France appeared.

Amid all this female ostentation, nothing seemed so supernally beautiful to the eye of the English monk as the modest and quiet damsel whose soft dark eyes brightened into vivid recognition of the name he bore, whose exquisite lips parted with the least mechanical of smiles which Vian had ever seen upon a woman's mouth, and whose words evidently came from such a simple and refined soul as he fancied lived only in heaven. It was Astrée; and Ami, with a dominant sense of her loveliness, had presented Vian to his love, with a most knightly remark as to Vian's intelligence and abilities. He had, however, hardly completed his sentences, when he became startled at his own feelings.

"Fortunate knight!" said the scholarly Englishman to Ami, as they went about their duties. "Such a face redeems the court of France; such an eye would reinvest the decaying knighthood of Europe with the soul of the oldest chivalry."

The remark only added pain to Ami's self-discovery. He thought only once of Nouvisset's corrective words.

Somehow Ami could not easily get his own words to follow one another, as they had done. Vian standing there in the glow of the evening, his fine nostril dilating still with the high excitement, his eyes strangely abysmal and poetic in the fervid light, because of something, — Vian looked altogether too intellectual, too unearthly,

too learned, too interesting. Astrée must have felt the charm!

Vian attempted to talk with Ami about the arrangements of the mimic combats, in which already the troops of cavalry were indulging as they were going through their manœuvres; but Ami was questioning his own soul as to what Astrée could have meant when she said to him that this man Vian looked as Nouvisset had described the knight of the future, — "a conqueror with accepted truth as his shield and unaccepted truth as his sword."

Vian tried, also, to dispose of the cofferer and master-masons, who, with hundreds of bricklayers and servants of all sorts, were demanding to be set to a task in the morning; but Ami was of little assistance.

His vision was beclouded with the besetting query, "Why did I not at once seize the occasion, and tell her girlish trustfulness that this Vian is a monk, and a monk discredited by Glastonbury Abbey too?"

The great-voiced chamberlain could get no satisfactory answer to his questions, when they were propounded to Ami. Even the warder who had in charge the shipping, was disgusted at the knight's heavy manner. Still were the claret fountains, "fed by secret conduits hid beneath the earth," spouting forth their treasures into golden vessels and silver cups; and still was Vian wondering what could have broken in upon the strong, calm current of Ami's intellectual life.

"Perhaps," said Vian, "he has had some unfortunate news from the capital; I will not disturb the privacy of his suffering."

All night long Vian kept dreaming or thinking of the rigidity with which his new-found friend — as he ventured to call him — bade him farewell, and the evidence of unpleasant and unremitting intellectual labor with which his face was so strangely clouded.

Day came, however, and with it another of those elaborate processions which suited not the more profound and comprehensive ideas that had dominated the souls of the knight and the monk. These thoughts came to Vian with more force, because Lord Shrewsbury, who was steward, and Essex, who was marshal, had each expressed his contempt of some of the arrangements whose conception had originated with Vian.

"I fancy that if the German monk lives, and the Church goes on blessing ignorance and cursing scholars, there will be more important processions than these," said the nettled monk.

At the same moment Ami, in Astrée's hearing, had uttered his contempt for the whole performance. Astrée knew not why he should so warmly say, —

"The monk Martin Luther, opposing the sale of indulgences, was a much more inspiring scene for a Christian to behold, than Wolsey on his mule."

Even Francis I., who through Louise of Savoy had begun again to suspect Ami of some sort of religious heresy which might embarrass politics, felt that at the earliest hour he must bring him under the influence of a conservative companion.

"Who could be more likely to serve the king in holding Ami fast to the Holy Church than the English monk whom he has so admired in these days at Guisnes?" said Louise of Savoy to his Majesty.

He resolved to bring them together soon, and further to cement a friendship which he did not fancy had suffered the slightest fracture.

The next day the French returned the visit of the English; and Ami, who under Astrée's eye had quite rallied from his discomfiture of the day before, warmly greeted Vian, who was more than delighted with his courtesy. The ceremonies attendant upon the meeting of the two monarchs, on Thursday, June 7, were soon

completed; and Wolsey and Bonnivet, placing the care of other days into the hands of those persons selected for the honor, granted blessings upon the monk and the knight, who henceforth might consider themselves as guests of both sovereigns.

"I am miserable enough," said Ami to Astrée, as the long shadows began to fall upon the heads of countless bills and lances without the pavilion, and through the plain and bowed windows separated by golden columns, died away until they were lost among the silver pillars, heavy with arabesques and enamelled ornaments that contrasted magically with the gay fringes which hung over the heads of these lovers.

"Miserable with me in your arms?" she inquired, as she looked up into his fiery eyes.

Ami yielded not his grasp as he protested: "You are all that might reconcile me to this continuous parade of lies. I am afraid that everything but you may prove untrue."

"That is a sweet faith for a lover, until the loved one finds that experience with disappointing people has created the suspicion that some day the best loved shall also prove a disappointment," quietly lisped the dear lips, which now kissed one of those fiery eyes.

"I wish you could kiss me blind," said he, sharply.

"You are adding sorrow to my wonder of you, Ami," said Astrée, with pathos.

"Oh, you are my pleasure and my pain, — my pain, because you are my joy. It is nothing that you do which pains me, but you are so lovely in the eyes of others."

"Would you not have it so, if only I am yours and yours alone?"

"I could dash out the life of a priest who dared to steal a glance from that eye! Astrée, did you know that Vian is a monk, — a Benedictine, once at Glastonbury Abbey, — and that he is now in politics with Wolsey?"

"No; never had I heard his name, until you blessed it with your friendship. I fear a monk."

That was exactly what Ami's jealousy was willing for her to say, even to the great wronging of Vian. Ami's demon had come again. He himself was startled by its power. He thought now he should be able to shut the passion up in her acknowledged fear of monks. Yet that, he knew, was not enough. Somehow he must do Vian justice; and he said, —

"Astrée, have I done wrong? No angel of heaven should have a fear of Vian; but I know he thinks admiringly of you. He is my friend; and —" Half ashamed of the discovery he had made of himself to one so innocent and so wise, he added: "I am not sad because of Vian or of you. Treat him with all admiring kindliness. I am thinking of something else. I hate the farce behind which Charles V. is connected, in which my king is aimlessly playing his part."

So easily does the heart oftentimes flee into the head with its woes, and rename them there.

As the 7th of June came, Vian and Ami were once more called into the service. Francis I. was more certain that the plans of Bonnivet would not miscarry, if Ami were in the place which his very abilities had created for him; and Wolsey was never quite easy without Vian at his elbow.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

LOVE AND LEARNING.

"Qui pleure larmes par amour
N'en sent mal ni douleur."

ASTRÉE'S eyes were full of love as she girded her knightly Ami, on the morning of the 9th; and never did a kiss possess for him such lasting preciousness as did that which still seemed to live upon his lips, when the knight found himself riding with the French King to meet, in the presence of that mighty company, the King of England.

The gay colors of the handsome tent sparkled in the dawn. Palisades surrounded it; and the tennis-court near by was exactly midway between the two camps. Three hundred English archers guarded the Sovereign of France; four hundred Frenchmen of like position protected the English King.

Ami had said to Vian, "Your king has crossed the Channel to meet his brother, Francis I.; the Sovereign of France will be the first to cross the frontier to greet Henry VIII. of England."

"This is well," answered Wolsey's trusted lieutenant.

Soon after, the shot was fired from the castle of Guisnes. The castle at Ardres gave answer. Overlooking the plain, mounted on a charger heavily laden with

mosaic of finest gold, Henry VIII., stout and yet well proportioned, sat like the sovereign he was, his ruddy face aglow with interest, while the soft air played upon his silver damask apparel, which shone with ribs of cloth of gold; and his commanding eye beheld afar, at a proper distance, the French King. Taller and more graceful than the English Sovereign, Francis I., his finely shaped form covered with gold and jewels which lay upon the cassock of gold frieze, appeared a most fascinating figure, as he lifted his arm, which was weighted with diamonds, rubies, and clinquant pearls and emeralds, to place more safely upon his head a velvet bonnet, which was also studded with gems. The eye of France had caught the eye of England.

Ami and Vian beheld it all with deep excitement. In a brief time, the provost-marshal and his archers had cleared the way. The marshals of the army followed; and their luxuriantly caparisoned horses made a slow-moving line of yellow flame. Princes and the King of Navarre, who now moved rapidly, could see before them the English monarch clad beneath the damask, which was thrown back, in velvet of the deepest crimson and satin of purest white, each garment fastened or adorned with jewels; his plume was made more attractive than that upon the bonnet of the French King, because of the star of brilliants which held it fast.

Astrée remarked, as the kings came near each other, that the eyes of the English King were very bright and piercing.

"And very illusive," said Ami, who desired to foster no admiration in her soul for things English.

The monarchs were approaching. The scarf of gold and purple which Francis I. wore over his almost radiant vest seemed to caress the long, wavy hair, which was partially held by a damask coif that was rough with gems. His black mustache contrasted with the golden hair be-

neath Henry's stout chin; and now Vian remarked upon the languishing eyes of the French King.

"But the eyes of your sovereign are powerful," ventured Astrée, who said it as though not enough attention had been paid by Ami to the earlier remark as to Henry's eyes.

What! should she and Vian be found in agreement even upon this topic?

Ami looked confused. The confusion of the knight was shot through with something fiery enough to remind Astrée of the naked sword which just now she had seen in the hand of the old Marquis of Dorset, who rode before the King of England.

Ami at length said, "The king's face is heavy."

"With thoughtfulness," added Vian, who remembered the opinion which Erasmus held of Henry VIII.

"I shall complete my own sentences, if it please you," retorted Ami, who at once touched Astrée's wrist with a distinct and commanding forcefulness she had never noticed when she had felt the stroke of his hands of love.

"This is not a moment for a fitting answer to your remark. If you are a knight, you may understand my saying," said the cool monk, remembering how the French emotion had often unhorsed the destiny of empires in the presence of English common-sense.

It was a perplexing moment to both, and Astrée's ruby lips opened as does a flower to emit fragrance.

Just then a horse — one which had been gayly covered for the use of the attendant of the Earl of Shrewsbury, a horse which had proved to be vicious and had broken loose, frightened by the noise made by the hautboys, trumpets, and drums of the Swiss guards who followed the Grand Master, covered with foam and cloth of gold, dashed across the border line, and came plunging along through dust and air, swiftly rushing toward the three persons whose words we have just heard.

Altogether unnerved by the hateful passion which had again flamed within his bosom, Ami was devising with fatal rapidity a plan for Astrée's safety which would have placed her in the path of the furious steed. At that moment Vian's eye was running along the line of splendor made up of Sir Henry Guildford, the henchmen, the Lord Cardinal Buckingham, and the rest. At the next instant, he saw Astrée in the hands of a man who had for the moment lost the power of wise reasoning. The woman was imperilled by a terrible death.

Summoning all his energies into two strong arms, and swift as thought, Vian seized the frightened creature, who was blindly trusting to the arms of Ami, and tore her from her lover and from danger. In a breath the horse was away; the knight, who himself had escaped death only by good fortune, yet lay in the dust-covered path of the beast; and Astrée, lovely as a silent dream, was still in a faint, held within the gentle but strong arms of the monk.

"Villain!" cried Ami, as he staggeringly approached with his dagger quivering before him. "A monk! a false monk you are!"

"Lying knight and wretch! Are you thankless to me for saving the life of this fair creature —"

"This creature you have befouled! Nay, nothing could befoul her white soul. But I challenge you!" growled the angry courtier, as he caught Astrée from the grasp of her protector.

"I *am* a monk!" — Vian really wished he had never tried to be anything else, — "I am a monk and a gentleman, a Pythagorean also, a servant of my Lord Cardinal and the king, and I must forbear to speak to you now. I shall henceforth refuse to act with you in this business of our sovereigns. Farewell, excellent lady!"

Vian mounted his horse, rode away, and was soon exchanging civilities with Bourbon, the Constable of France,

in the valley of Ardres. As he looked upon the sword of State borne by Bourbon, and into the face of the Grand Écuyer, Vian's mind often wandered to Ami. He never had hated a monk in Glastonbury as he hated that passionate jealousy which he now saw was almost a madness. What would become of Astrée? Would she ever know what had happened?

While he had been rescuing the beautiful woman from what otherwise would have been certain death, the monarchs had, after a brief pause and a gorgeous display, rushed into each other's arms, amid the acclamations of the throngs, who knew and cared nothing for Ami's agony. Three times did the kings embrace. Arm-in-arm they had walked toward the pavilion.

Vian could hardly understand how he had escaped noticing what on all sides was held to be a scene unsurpassed. But he remembered that there had been a mighty rush of interior currents as the three — Ami, Astrée, and himself — stood alone on that chosen spot, meaning to behold a spectacle, and instead finding one of life's most significant milestones.

"Only my Lord Cardinal and Admiral Bonnivet entered the pavilion with their masters," said one of the constables to Vian, who with drawn sword in company with another was keeping ward at the salute.

"*Bons amis!*" "*French and English!*" shouted the officers of both armies, who now had broken ranks, and lost in each other's dominions, with pipes and clarions and waving pennons were attempting to create again to sight and hearing a mighty expression of that somewhat recently born affection which France and England now enjoyed. Two persons, who had been waiting through laborious weeks for this hour, in order that they might then fitly utter the deeper feelings of friendship along with the more superficial emotions connected with these pageants, did not care even to see each other

now. These were the knight and the monk, — Ami and Vian.

On Monday, the 11th, Vian and Ami, without an utterance one to the other, saw the tournament which on Friday and Saturday the former had prepared, enter upon its glorious career. There had been some difficulty as to which shield should hang above the other; but it was settled, not by the French Constable and Dorset, who were chosen, but by bluff Harry himself, that they should be hung equally high, — the French King's on the right and his own on the left. When Ami presented the pennon of Francis as a raspberry, Vian suspended upon the hawthorn-tree, which was chosen as Henry's, the tree of nobility, the shield of the King of England. Once their eyes met; and Ami's eyes were directed, by a powerful glance from the monk, to the palace of Henry VIII., in front of which Ami read the words: "He whom I favor, wins."

Francis I. had dined on Sunday with the English Queen at Guisnes, as had Henry VIII. with Queen Claude at Ardres. In the course of the conversation each monarch, seeking to avoid unpleasant themes, such as Charles V. and the Reformers, had found himself chatting about so inconsiderable a person as the monk Vian, and his valor of the day preceding in saving Astrée. Astrée's life, it was understood at both courts, Vian had preserved.

"And he is a scholar of wondrous gifts," said Katherine of Arragon.

"I trust he does not consort with such scholars as those who infest France at this hour," remarked the king, who never failed to remember that Henry's queen was the aunt of Charles V., and therefore could have no love for what might lead to heresy.

"He has been befriended by Erasmus himself; and the wonder grows when we behold his learned pages on

matters ecclesiastical. I doubt not he would have been Abbot of Glastonbury had he not come to serve our Lord Cardinal Wolsey," pursued the queen.

"Is it he? I think now it *is* he of whom Erasmus himself has written to us." And Francis I. remembered then that a prudent silence might be most valuable, for he had already considered the plan of securing young scholars which Erasmus himself had suggested; and this involved a hint of Vian's becoming at some time professor in the College Royal.

Three years before, Budé had offered Erasmus a place, in the name of the king; and the elder scholar had bade Budé look out for Vian. This the Sorbonne and, above all, Duprat could not for a moment approve.

Later on in that Sunday afternoon, at Guisnes, Vian had been received by the Sovereign of France; the French monarch found, before an hour had elapsed, that his prejudices against Englishmen had passed away in the presence of the Benedictine.

"I could love every Englishman, if they were all so refined as he," said the French King.

With delicate reserve did the monk speak of the king's friend, Ami, — his acquirements, his brilliant abilities, his knightly bearing, his theories of life, his loyalty to his sovereign. In vain did even Francis I. seek to extort from Vian a syllable which reflected upon Ami's temper or his love.

"His devotion to the beautiful lady is more ardent than the love of kings," remarked Wolsey's lieutenant.

Francis I. smiled at this somewhat audacious sally, and resumed the conversation, which included such topics as the English monasteries, Thomas More, Erasmus, and "the new learning." The evening at length came, and the King of France took his leave of the Queen of England. He did not leave, however, until he had promised himself the pleasure of seeing Vian again.

"A most engaging monk is Vian," he said to Queen Katherine.

Over at Ardres, Henry VIII. had been seated for long hours with the Queen Claude, and the most admiring of Ami's friends at court, — the Duchesse d'Alençon. Henry had often heard of her accomplishments, and that Francis I. called her "Marguerite of Marguerites;" and soon after his arrival, he wondered not that Marot enjoyed reading poems to her, or that the king loved his sister as tenderly as his phrase implied.

"Your royal brother has a most chivalrous and learned friend in the knight Ami," said Henry, who had heard of Ami through both Vian and Wolsey, when they had talked over the preparations.

"And the knight tells us," replied the duchesse, "that your court is adorned by at least one of the most able of young monks, — the Benedictine friar, Vian."

It never had struck the King before how little of the friar was in Vian.

Everything at the court of Queen Claude that day was magnificent. Why should not Henry himself talk now in a stream of exaggerated luxuriance? His court must at least equal that of his cousin in scholarship; for he knew himself to be more learned than the Sovereign of France. He had beheld on that afternoon the queen clad in gold frieze, Mme. de Vendôme clothed in satin and gems, the incomparable Duchesse d'Alençon arrayed in velvet and rubies. He himself sat easily, with his wide collar heavy with the art of the lapidary and goldsmith. He had leisurely admired the exhibit of female loveliness which flitted through the extemporized house. Why should he not speak in magnificent eulogy of the brightest young monk in England?

"The most learned among the most loving, the most loving among the most learned," said Henry, drawing a long breath into his burly body. "He is already the

companion of Erasmus and the friend of Thomas More. He has the greatest variety of powers. Glastonbury Abbey had no peer for him. Hampton Court and Whitehall have never seen his equal in expedients of policy or knowledge. He was solitary among monks whose whole life was given to books. He knows manuscripts; and he writes odes which are more beautiful than those of the ancients."

"Is he a poet such as Master Clement Marot?" inquired the pretty Marguerite, who, as Duchesse d'Alençon, had not forgotten the love-songs which Marot had taught her.

"A poet in truth! Would that you might hear his melodious voice in his own lines! A musician as well is this Vian. 'T is he who made the choir at Glastonbury one sacred harmony with his own singing. He has mastered musical instruments. He brought us the harp at Greenwich, the lute, and the cithern; and sweet, indeed, are the songs which he sings while he plays upon these."

The musical soul of Marguerite was all attention; and she promised herself, on the instant, that she would break down Ami's influence with Francis the king, and that in spite of the jealous hate which the knight bore to the monk, and which he had confessed to the duchesse, Vian of Glastonbury should recite his verses and sing his songs at Ardres.

As Henry VIII. rode away at five o'clock, displaying his skill as a horseman in curvetings and other exhibitions of grace and mastery, Ami Perrin, who had overheard all this praise of Vian, was burning with jealous hate, and resolving that if his love or power could prevent it, the monk should never come to Ardres.

"Astrée, you said once, 'I fear a monk,'" said Ami inquiringly, when he found her alone.

"And I should not be alive to tell you again, if it

had not been for a monk," answered she, as she sought in vain to kiss the lips which then burned with curses.

There is no such apparently evil world as is this, to an unreasonably jealous heart. The assertion of all others that it might be foolish made Ami more earnest that he should make his hate more reasonable to himself. Every one who knew the monk Vian knew how foolish was Ami's jealousy.

"He is a Pythagorean," said the Duchesse d'Alençon, who, as Marguerite de Valois, with Nouvisset had dabbled a little in Greek philosophy, "and it is impossible that he really loves any woman. Women to Pythagoreans are only evil men, who have been born again on a lower plane. Besides, he is a monk. He is under a vow."

"That fact would not make me less certain of his infernal plot to hold Astrée in his arms," said Ami, as savagely as he dare say anything to the king's sister. And then, as he thought of it, — the apparent longing with which Vian at first looked into her eyes, the swift and measured praise which came from his lips at the moment when he met her, the crafty words which Vian spoke about the king's eyes which put them into agreement, above all, the seizing and tearing her out of his own arms, — he could feel his grasp loosening yet, as again he could also see the rushing horse, — oh, it was all too much!

"The detestable monk really loves her, and I will have revenge upon him," said Ami, as he strode away.

Everything fanned the flame. Not an hour passed that some one did not congratulate the lover that Astrée had been saved from death.

"And who and what is the monk Vian?" inquired these bearers of congratulatory tidings, with unconscious pertinacity.

Every one praised the courageous alertness of the

monk; and some even criticised Ami by asking, "Where was the knight at the time?"

"This implied censure I will not endure," said he to Astrée. "I was trying to save you."

Tears came into Ami's eyes, but they were soon gone into the flame on his cheek. In all this difficulty with Vian and his own soul, Ami had not the smallest thought of objecting to anything which Astrée — his "star," as he kept calling her through these hours of gloom — had felt or said or done. True, after consciousness had come, she did inquire gratefully about Vian, and even asked if he was harmed; but Ami was not made so ignoble by his jealousy as to censure her.

She had made him forget everything but her loveliness and nobility, when she said: "I know you did all that a lover and a knight could do. Vian the monk happened to be on the spot where was safety; but he did not know it until afterward. Your place was the place of danger; no one of us knew it until afterward. If you had been in the place of the monk, you would have saved me."

It seemed so infinitely true to Astrée's soul. He never discovered that the fires of his passion lit up the trifling possibility of the contrary supposition being true into a very Sinai of truth itself. The light, however, permitted the casting of some awful shadows.

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CHAPTER XXXIV.

AN UNHORSED KNIGHT.

Oh, wad ye tak a thought and mend!
BURNS.

EVERYTHING appeared to go against Ami for the next forty-eight hours. Even the grounds chosen for the lists, which were three hundred yards long and more than one hundred yards in width, seemed a poor selection. The tapestry hangings for the enclosing galleries were unaccountably dull.

"Those chambers, — they were carefully glazed for the queens, — how ill-placed they are!" said he to Astrée. "The foss is too shallow to keep the crowd back."

Alas, Ami, nothing goes well to a sick heart!

"Blunderers, all of them!" And he pointed toward the twelve English and twelve French archers guarding the entrances. He was convinced that even the cloth of gold which served for the trunk and old leaves, and the green silk which had been made into the living foliage, and even the silver and Venetian gold which fancy was expected to transform into flowers and fruits upon the tree of Francis I., under whose immense branches the heralds stood on a huge damask mound, constituted only a vulgar and uncomely pretence. Indeed, everything save Astrée was a lie to Ami.

Men are driven to truth oftentimes by experience with being untrue to themselves.

"The king appears in bad condition," complained he.

It was true. The monarchs, each supported by eighteen aids, had held the lists against all comers; but the swords which Henry easily wielded were too heavy for the arms of Francis. Ami was in a rage when his own sovereign essayed in vain to sweep a huge blade about his royal head.

"Astrée," said he, "my king has been a baby, with his mother and Duprat as his guardians. Look you! I love him. They are spurring their chargers now. On my soul, how well he rides! Bayard himself made him a knight. Ah! the lance of Henry couches low. See, Astrée! The shock from Henry will be too great; powerful was that thrust! Oh, I shall not permit my sovereign's saddle to be emptied like that, — not I, Astrée — "

Ami leaped from her. Soon the knight held a lance. Before many minutes had gone, Ami had triumphed. First, and indeed solitary among the French, did he unhorse the splendid Duke of Suffolk, Charles Brandon, who had divided honors with Henry VIII. at the tournament.

Astrée was aglow with proud excitement. Every lady in jewels, every emblazoned man, did her honor. Ami's chivalry was the one theme. But, alas! the mind of a jealous man is not to be bewildered even by his successes. With fatal agony it is predetermined to one object of contemplation.

"I wish," said the knight, "it had been the despicable monk. I had even run him through, as he lay there in the dust."

Astrée could not restrain herself. For Ami's sake she would speak. "Is that of the new knighthood? Ami, he who keeps my love must be a true knight."

Francis I., beloved of Ami, friend and king, came close to him who at that moment was the pride of France.

"Would that Chevalier Bayard had seen it!" The king's eyes were congratulations. "Ah! would that Nouvisset, Francesco, and Admiral Andrea Doria were here! But Astrée" — and the languishing eyes of the monarch became intense with interest — "Astrée is here. I would have you dine with my sister, Duchesse d'Alençon, and my queen. Astrée, you will come with your knight! Farewell!"

"Sire," asked Ami, "will any from the camp of Henry of England be with us?"

"Ami, beloved and faithful," replied his Majesty, with hesitation, "only at our desire or at our command. Farewell!"

What could this mean? "Desire" and "Command," — two realms overruled by two sceptres. Under which was Vian? Was he under either? Would Vian grace or disgrace that occasion? Would he be present? All these questions occupied Ami's mind, to the exclusion even of Astrée's grateful enjoyment at such an hour.

Ami had the right to make such queries his own. Louise of Savoy, as we know, was sure that Vian — a Benedictine monk — would more strongly attach Ami to the Holy Church.

Besides this, the King of France now believed that in meeting Vian he had met the most fascinating man in England. His complete self-mastery, his far-sighted conceptions of human progress, his admirable temper, his various accomplishments, his exquisite taste — all of them finding easy expression upon his lips or in graceful action — had charmed and captivated the French King.

"Is it he? It *is* he," said the king to Louise of Savoy. "It is Vian, of whom Erasmus told us."

"He surpasses Marot in rhymes, and the lute-players of Florence in music," said the graceful Marguerite.

"And a monk, — a Benedictine?" carefully asked the shrewd Louise of Savoy.

"Yes; without a peril in his soul for a woman or a man. Indeed, he is a Pythagorean," said the enthusiastic Duchesse d'Alençon.

Louise of Savoy knew nothing of Pythagoras; but she had abounding confidence in Marguerite and in her use of this new name. Somehow she obtained the impression that no court-rumor of an unpleasant nature would be possible on Vian's account, because he was a Pythagorean; that was sufficient.

"Vian is a scholar," said Francis I. "My court must concern itself with ideas, as Ami has urged. Vian — if only my cousin Henry will yield him to France — may supplant the heretics who endanger everything by their advance, and the worn-out reactionaries who imperil everything by their retreat. The true scholar must be a soldier of another sort than these."

The king had a dim vision of what France needed. He entertained the notion that Vian might do for France what he thought More, Linacre, Grocyn, and perhaps Colet were doing for England. The lines of power were about to pass out of Ami's hands.

An hour had passed, and the Duchesse d'Alençon had rehearsed it all — the plans, the hopes, the accomplished facts — to Astrée. Never did Ami feel so surely that Astrée, his love, did not desire to see the young monk again, as when she brought the whole story to him.

It had been a busy morning with both Ami and Vian. Nothing, however, had made it easy or possible for either to utter a word to the other. Francis I. had long ago, in the progress of these ceremonies, broken down all suspicion, and made the intimacy of the two monarchs appear to be a stable fact for future policies, by going with only four companions to the very apartments of Henry VIII., and having entered the chamber of the English King alone, by saying in great glee, "Here, you

see, I am your prisoner." A hearty friendship had sprung up between the two camps. And now the unrestrained hospitalities of this unique occasion were to be fitly concluded. The monk Vian had charge of the chapel; the knight Ami promised Bonnivet to arrange the banquet.

"But," said Ami, "on one condition."

"On any condition, faithful knight!" replied the admiral.

"I shall not dine with Wolsey's monkish servant, — that brazen and hateful Vian."

"The banquet you may prepare. I will beg the King of France that any dinner which would bring Vian hither be dismissed from his thoughts."

Vian had made the chapel for the morning of the 24th a shining witness to his own industry and intelligence, and a fascinating testimonial to the richness of the now concluding pageant. Cardinal Wolsey, attired in proper robes, sang solemn Mass. His voice had the ring of conscious triumph, as its echoes passed above the altar and the reliquaries, and died away against the two canopies of cloth of gold hanging at the side. Legates of England vied with bishops and cardinals of France to make the scene illustrious in ecclesiastical personages. Courtesies, so like flowers on thornless but dead stalks, appeared at every juncture. Even the Gospels the French King refused to kiss, as the book was borne in the hands of Constable de Bourbon, until it had first been offered to the King of England. The queens enacted the same courtesy, when at the "Agnus Dei" the "Pax" was presented. These excellent ladies kissed each other, to settle the controversy.

Pace preached in Latin on the blessings of peace, and then sprang into the sky a monstrous achievement of pyrotechnics. Throngs beheld with awe a huge salaman-

der, spouting fire and traversing the sky toward Guisnes. It occupied the mind of the crowd at the celebration of Mass, which occurred immediately after its appearance. It was the last flash of a huge dream.

The banquet came. Kings and legates forgot to be temperate; knights and monks forgot to quarrel. The great fountains of wine gushed once more, sending their red streams up into the golden daytime; and then the splendid picture faded. The red cheek of Ami and the determined eye of Vian, each reflecting the suggestion contained in the other, remained the unsuspected and doubtless unseen testimonials that something had occurred on the "Field of the Cloth of Gold" which would influence human history.

END OF VOL. I.